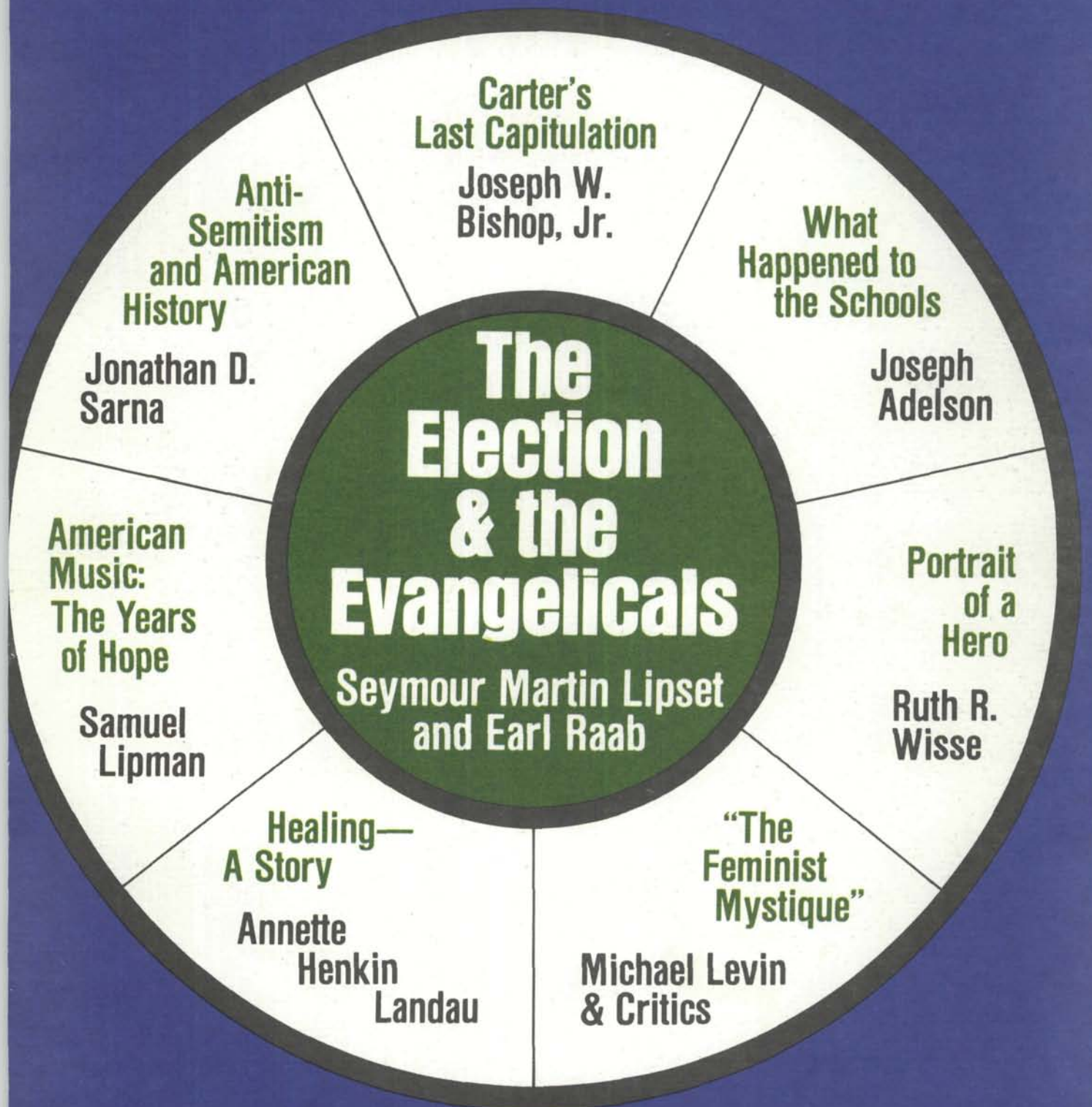
Commentary

Volume Seventy-one, Number Three, March 1981



BOOKS IN REVIEW:
Charles Horner/David Vital/Peter Shaw/George Lane/Chester E. Finn, Jr./Herman Belz

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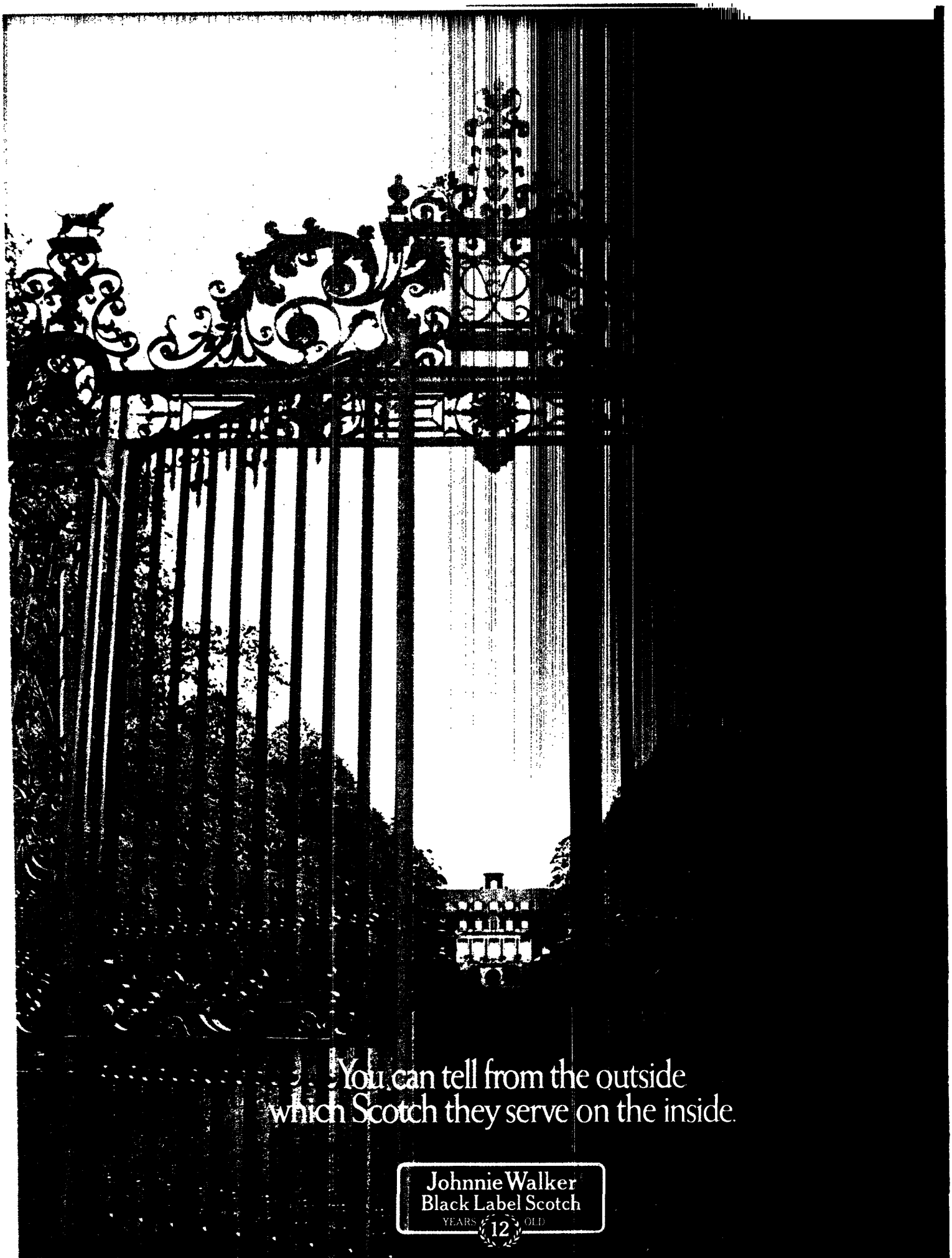

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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

"The Feminist Mystique"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read with interest Michael Levin's article, "The Feminist Mystique" [December 1980]. Mr. Levin has carefully described the illogic within feminist thought, and the abuses that result when that thought is taken up by a greedy, meddlesome government. However, Mr. Levin also seems to say that if the feminist mystique is penetrated, the feminist phenomenon will disappear. I cannot agree with that. . . .

Although Mr. Levin hopes that some day "freedom and rationality will return to the occupational marketplace," his wish is impossible: freedom and rationality never were a part of the occupational marketplace, as women (among others) were deliberately excluded from many jobs they were perfectly capable of performing. Flight into a past that never was begs the two most important questions raised by the feminist phenomenon: first, what are the legitimate grievances of women; second, how can we satisfy those grievances without abusing the freedom of others?

Feminism was called into being by abuse of and discrimination against women beyond any justification by biological differences. Quotas are irrational, but so is discrimination. I am convinced that the best way to fight the former is to eliminate the latter.

FREDERICK BUTZEN
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is ironic that one of the leading intellectual journals of our age would run a series of articles demeaning to those of us who believe strongly in individual rights. First, Midge Decter ["The Boys on the Beach," September 1980] lumps all homosexuals into one nasty package bound by whips and chains, and now Michael Levin divides the boys from the girls on the basis of their different genetic and hormonal structure. What comes next? Not too long ago, arguments about the differences inherent in individuals because of the ethnic or national group into which they were born were quite common. Will an article on the physical inferiority of the Jew be next in your magazine, or will you do something enlightened like publishing a study comparing the skull size of the average black and the average cranium of a magazine editor?

Undeniably, there are important biologically-based differences between the sexes. Men are built like men while women have a totally different physical structure. Unfortunately for Mr. Levin's arguments, the rest of contemporary feminism does not fall apart because of this small difference in appearance.

A person who cries that the amount of available evidence linking women's traditional personality and role with the culture of a society has a responsibility when arguing to provide a reader with solid evidence to back up his ideas. Mr. Levin's paltry attempt to prove his theory has less solid information behind it than do many of the works which he condemns.

According to Mr. Levin, the supreme example of man's inherent superiority (and the reader must assume that Mr. Levin so divides the sexes because of his descriptions of females—the "giddy, chatty" members of the human species) is his ability to sit in a tank and watch his buddies get blown to pieces. All women are capable of is a bit of clawing around during a faculty meeting. Perhaps one element of civilization is a desire to end war and its horrific destruction of humanity; perhaps if women are truly not as eager to participate in wanton destruction, they are the more civilized element in the group. . . .

If Mr. Levin's theory that women do not do the work of men were correct, then there should be few if any women sitting around a faculty meeting at Mr. Levin's university. Until the feminist movement pushed for equal opportunities for women, many highly qualified female applicants did not get into graduate school, let alone through the doctoral program. People like Mr. Levin could certainly decide once again that women do not belong in such places and again deny them the opportunity to attempt to finish a Ph.D. program.

Along the same lines, few women had the necessary credentials to go into business management, because schools refused to let them in. Harvard did not have a woman in its business school until very recently.

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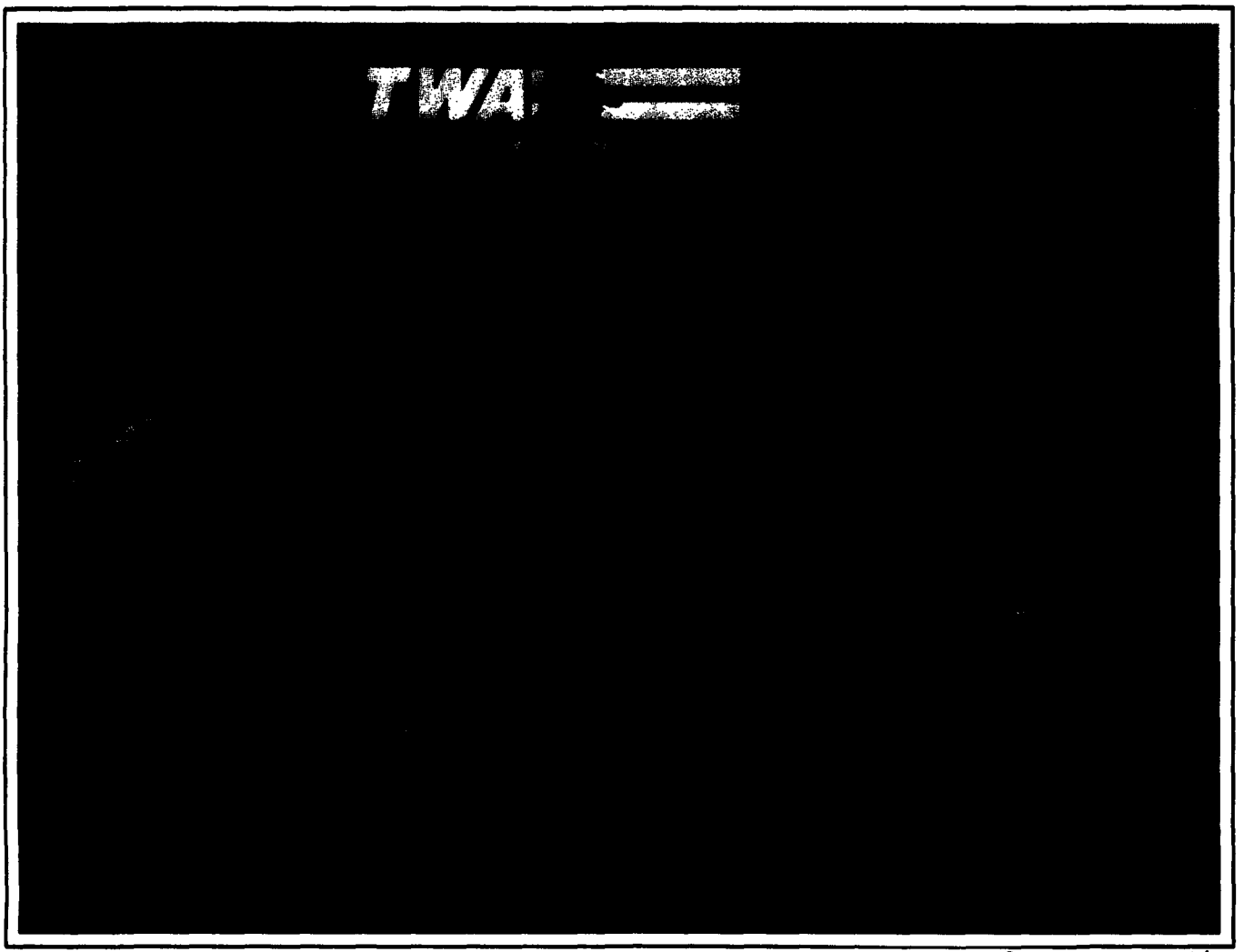

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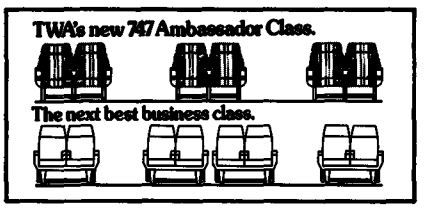

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How can anyone truly document that women cannot perform as well as men when, for so many years, only the exceptional woman had a chance even to pick up the skills necessary to compete?

Taking this genetic thing one step further, Mr. Levin could argue that physical differences not only between sexes but also between ethnic groups are genetically controlled, and that these differences signal the inherent inferiority of one group and superiority of another. After all, how many tall blondes come out of the Jewish people? Perhaps Harvard correctly placed a quota on the number of Jews entering its outstanding institute in 1922—we must not let Harvard begin to resemble City University, was the argument. Perhaps the efforts of the Nazis to weed out the genetically infirm should be applauded. . . .

Perhaps the worst aspect of Mr. Levin's article is its obvious anti-woman bias. He does not believe in educational equality: he thinks it absurd that girls be taught things like changing a fuse or playing baseball, things that will help them to be self-reliant and help them work together with others, and he thinks it absurd that boys learn cooking and baby care, skills that will make them better partners in a relationship.

Feminists want to open the doors of society for everyone with the ability to pass through. They want each individual to have the opportunity to fulfill his/her potential. That means that if a woman is capable of being a scientist or a professor, the barriers of society should not be strung so tightly around her goal that she has little or no chance of success. It means that a man who is compassionate and tuned into the feelings of others should not be criticized because he turns his thoughts into poetry or into dance. The human entity is capable of greatness; feminists want to give everyone a shot at achieving his/her own goals.

Goals can include being a homemaker—solely that. Feminists recognize the abilities of some men in that area might be far superior to those of their wives and so those men should be given an opportunity to fulfill their potential. Many feminists have families; the difference seems to be in the relationship not only between the mother and the children, but also between the father and the children. Feminists prefer close families, with everyone participating in the daily life of the unit.

Would the article by Mr. Levin have been published if the word Jew was substituted for the word feminist? Is it easier for this magazine to target the female of the species for removal from the job market—now that conservatism is in? One needs only to look at Germany during the 20's and again during the 30's to realize that one very successful result of the genetic theory was the isolation and the eventual removal of one group from the economic market—resulting in an improvement in the German economy.

Again, it is tempting to think that hatred of women in its latest version will collide with human nature once too often and then just go away. Perhaps one day, collectively, men will cry, enough, and we'll be free—all men and women.

IRIS MITGANG
Chair, National Women's
Political Caucus
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Michael Levin's article on problems associated with feminism contains no criticism of the Equal Pay Act which requires covered employers to pay men and women equally for the same work. I assume from this that Mr. Levin does not object to the principle of equal pay for equal work. If this is the case, he should look again at the proposal to require equal pay for comparable work.

Despite the Equal Pay Act, women's earnings are only about three-fifths of men's earnings. To some extent this may be a holdover from the day when pay differentials were justified on the ground that men had families to support but women didn't. Today's enormous divorce rate has made this argument inapplicable, particularly since only about 4 percent of eligible women receive alimony and 25 percent, child support. Moreover, pay is compensation for work, not welfare. Therefore, pay differentials for the same work are unfair.

One reason the Equal Pay Act has not achieved equal earnings is that men and women do not on the whole do the same work, and women's traditional occupations are not as well paid as men's. Is this because the work differs, or because of discrimination based on sex? Why are nurses often paid less than house painters? Why do states pay librarians, generally women, less than liquor-store clerks, generally men? (I do not think any of the existing discrepancies exist because liquor clerks are more likely to be victims of armed robbery.)

The problem of evaluating different types of work is a difficult one. We need to consider the pros and cons of making the effort. But I do believe the problem is a real one, entitled to more serious attention than it was given in the article.

EDITH U. FIERST
Chevy Chase, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There isn't much I can add to Michael Levin's excellent and comprehensive article except an anecdote which substantiates a few of his points.

About a year ago I had the opportunity to preview some elementary- and junior-high-school material being put through a final editing by the publisher; these were mostly work-study books on mathematics, science, history, and reading comprehension, scheduled for distribution to public-school systems throughout the country. The effects of affirmative action and the anti-gender brigade were not only all too apparent in this material, but ludicrous and distracting. Far more work went into making certain that all races, ethnic groups, and both sexes were represented in the problems than went into the problems themselves. Here are samples of the editorial instructions to the publisher's free-lance text writers and illustrators:

• "Avoid sentences that necessitate the pronouns *he* and *his*; in other instances, use *his/her, he/she, her/his,* or *she/he.*"

• "This problem should portray seven adolescent persons playing on a sidewalk outside a tenement; two should be sitting on the steps, two playing catch with a baseball glove and ball, two playing hockey on rollerskates, and one sitting on a bicycle; other sports implements, such as bats, tennis racquets, and basketballs should be in evidence. Three of the persons should be female, playing either catch or hockey, and one should be distinctively black; two of the males should be black or have Hispanic features. All should be dressed similarly with no distinctive male/female attire." (This particular problem concerned whether or not

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Godspeed, Mr. President

With the induction of Ronald Reagan and his administration, Americans look for new directions and new visions.

They long for an end to national drift and decline.

They yearn for restoration of America's primacy.

They hunger for greater hope for the future of themselves, their families, and their country.

Unfailingly, a change in administrations has a buoyant effect on the American spirit. All too often, though, this uplift is short-lived. We are a people impatient to get things done, quick to sour on our own leaders and institutions.

We demand so much of our government and those who lead it. We lose sight of what government actually is: an instrumentality of the *people*; a means by which we the people meet our objectives. We expect the Oval Office to turn men into miracle makers, forgetting that no President can achieve what is beyond the will and purpose of the people.

What is their will? By their votes last November, Americans indicated the course they want the nation to take under its new leadership. It embraces these needs:

- Buttressing our national defense; reasserting our free world leadership dedicated to maintaining stability and peace among nations; restoring constancy and coherence to our foreign policy and our relationships with the nations that share common values with us.
- Building our economic might through a revitalized system of free enterprise disciplined by the competitive forces of the marketplace.
- Strengthening social justice, freedom, equality; raising living standards for all; extending new opportunities to the deprived among us.
- Controlling the growth and cost of government and its intrusion into our lives and liberties.
- Slowing the pace of social experimentation, improving what is working, modifying and even discarding what is not.

The time has come for renewal and rededication. For too many, the American dream has taken on tarnish. It needs burnishing. There is much to be done — and undone. Let us begin.

Godspeed, Mr. President.

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the "persons" should demonstrate for the construction of a new recreational park.) . . .

More interesting to me was a conversation I subsequently had with an editor of the elementary-school work books. After having said that I was appalled by the low level of the material being presented, . . . I also made the strenuous remark that the material was propaganda. To my amazement, the editor (a woman) did not deny it. In fact, she launched into a speech about the necessity of making teachers and students "rethink" their concepts of human beings. She was particularly pleased by the fact that in most of the problems whites were represented not only in the minority, but were often portrayed in a "supporting-cast" role. She was, of course, also delighted that females were usurping males in the "traditional" roles; she didn't care if such role-switching was plausible . . . or not; "adults will have to get used to the idea," she said, "and children must be taught correctly from the beginning." . . .

EDWARD CLINE
Forest Hills, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I commend Michael Levin for his excellent analysis of the so-called feminist movement. Although it is occasionally possible to find criticisms of the prevailing crusade against "sex stereotypes" and "sex roles," few of these criticisms have brought to light the true totalitarian potential of this movement. Mr. Levin's analysis is thus long overdue. . . .

A point which has been completely overlooked by most authors on the subject, whether pro- or anti-feminist, is the need for human beings to cultivate differences between the sexes—both biological and symbolic or romantic—which serve an important part in the process of attraction between the sexes. That most people are heterosexual necessarily means that most people are attracted to the opposite sex because of its differences from their own. . . .

Actually, many of the often-degraded "sex stereotypes" and "roles," even if their biological basis is not readily apparent, are nevertheless deeply ingrained not in society as much as in human nature. The stereotype that men are stronger than women is universal, perhaps not so much because it is generally true (though it is) as because of the fact that for the most part men simply *look* stronger than women, a biological difference which in itself is one of the main facilitators of women's attraction to men. Similarly, men are attracted to women in part because of the fact that women *look* more delicate. This difference in the appearance of men and women, in turn, leads to the role, despised by the feminists, of the man as the protector of the woman (which, of course, was and perhaps still is biologically necessary for the survival of the species). Another stereotype resulting from this perceived difference is that of the male as more aggressive (also confirmed by hormonal studies).

These stereotypes are thus inevitable. Those who believe they are not must also believe that it is possible to change the way in which people receive different feelings from different perceptions. Does anybody believe that a massive educational crusade will, for example, make people stop feeling more reluctant to step on flowers than to step on grass? Or that people can be trained to see a wart hog as beautiful and a bird of paradise as grotesque? . . .

The danger comes when the feelings people receive from their perceptions of the opposite sex are consistently betrayed. "Role reversal" will not stop the tendency of people to associate certain concepts with one sex more than with the other. Encouraging women to box and lift weights will not cause men to stop regarding strength as a masculine attribute. Nor will encouraging women to become more aggressive cause men or women to see aggression as symbolically sex-neutral. This is one aspect of the current debate over drafting women and/or placing them into combat which has been largely overlooked. The military, and combat especially, is symbolically the most male of all socially acceptable institutions in our culture. It cannot be made symbolically sex-neutral, because there is no way that it can be dissociated from the masculine concepts of strength, aggression, and protection. Even if the social planners were successful in forcing the military to be 50 percent female by the use of quotas, those concepts on which the military depends would still be symbolically male.

In their book, *The Psychology of Sex Differences*, Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, who admit to a "feminist" bias, nevertheless state that men are more aggressive than women in every culture for which evidence is available. Other researchers have agreed. Note that they are not merely saying that there has never been a known culture in which women were *more* aggressive than men; they are also saying that there has never been a culture in which women were *as* aggressive as men. What does this imply about the future of a culture which encourages, even *forces*, its women into the most aggressive of all socially acceptable activities? . . .

Again, I commend Mr. Levin for courageously saying many things that long needed to be said, and I commend COMMENTARY for having the courage to publish his article.

R.K. BECKER
Racine, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The spending habits of the 60's required supplemented incomes in the 70's, and it was this economic necessity, coupled with generally liberalized attitudes as well as a push from some early feminists, that created job and career opportunities for women.

This would be praiseworthy if institutionalized feminism had not taken total credit and become a chic, glamorous, and narcissistic movement totally out of touch with the vast majority of America's working population. The doctrinaire feminists ignore the fact that most men as well as most women hold tedious and menial jobs. Only elitists who would not perform either task would consider soldering and riveting more rewarding than typing and answering phones.

Similarly, although the grandiose International Women's Conference held in Copenhagen last year disintegrated into a pro-terrorist and anti-Western travesty, the self-congratulatory delegates insisted that it was a success. . . .

Thank you, Michael Levin, for liberating me from some lingering doubts about feminism.

RUTH S. KING
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a psychologist, I would like to make some additional comments on Michael Levin's article. What follows is all supported by published research. . . .

Sex hormones pervade every cell of the body and determine the pro-

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THE TIME HAS COME AGAIN WHEN AMERICANS MUST FIGHT FOR THEIR FREEDOM.

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clivities on which the environment acts. Watch two completely unsocialized baby monkeys: the male runs and jumps, the female sits and watches. His early movements in space, reaching out, measuring distance, are basic to the well-known male superiority in spatial relations. If the male has this naturally, women can to some extent make up this deficit, and others, through training.

Though not strikingly different from young females in grade-school arithmetic, males excel when it comes to higher mathematics. This has been apparent for a long time in the Scholastic Aptitude Test, where both sexes do equally well in the verbal area (in an earlier decade, girls excelled), but girls do less well in the quantitative or mathematical area. . . .

There are many women competent in math, as in all other fields, but their relative number is small. Math, physics, chemistry, and engineering account for only a small fraction of all female Ph.D.'s. That the feminist movement alone has been responsible for the impressive advance of women into medicine, law, and psychology cannot be proved. . . . That they do not move into supervisory positions in proportion to their number is due to the fact that many of them work only part-time in order to fulfill home commitments. . . .

Surveys show that for most women, equality with men in jobs and incomes contributes little to contentment, but does increase stress ailments.

A woman at home with children, doing all the housewifely tasks plus acting as child psychologist, . . . engaged in her free hours in worthy community enterprises, and cultivating her talents might indeed have the better of the bargain. An old pattern, but still an attractive one. Compared with the work of most men, even the overglamorized professional, it is still a good job. . . .

The latest demographic figures show a marked rise in the death rate of adolescents up to age twenty-four. Drugs, alcohol, suicide, and vehicular accidents account for the toll. This age group fits neatly the era of easy divorce, single parenting, substitute caretakers, and casual sex now endemic in our society. There has also been an alarming increase in violence in the last several years. Insecure and inadequate men, and their number is legion, are threatened increasingly by growing female power and preemption of work areas. . . .

GRACE RUBIN-RABSON
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is unfortunate that in order to show the poverty of liberal feminist thought, Michael Levin chose to open with a quote from an article written seventeen years ago by sociologist Alice Rossi. Unfortunate because had Mr. Levin examined Professor Rossi's current work, he would have found substantial agreement with his own position, as well as an abundance of additional evidence to support his thesis. Anyone familiar with the recent work of Professor Rossi is aware of significant departures from the position she took in her 1964 article. She has, in fact, become a leading critic of the extreme cultural determinist outlook and has argued eloquently that social scientists have ignored for too long the biological basis of sex differences.

For example, had Mr. Levin read a more current issue of *Daedalus*, he would have found a 1977 article by Professor Rossi, "A Biosocial Perspective on Parenting," which rankled many feminists. In that article, Professor Rossi argues that women have a child-rearing instinct, rooted in our primate heritage, that is absent in men. Professor Rossi places a great deal of importance on the mother-child bond and suggests that many of the programs advocated by feminists go against the forces of nature and can thus be implemented only with great difficulty. . . .

Professor Rossi then reflects on her 1964 article and notes that her current position has been

> . . . arrived at only after a long period of personal and intellectual concern that involved confronting my own previous analysis of sexual equality in the pages of *Daedalus* and finding it wanting. But is is imperative to return periodically to the most basic facts of a family system and to one's own political ideology, and to examine both against the grain of our usual presuppositions.

The evidence Mr. Levin brings forth to support his thesis bears striking similarity to the evidence Professor Rossi uses to support her views. Mr. Levin, in 1980, discusses the role of a baby's cry in eliciting oxytocin secretion in the mother. Three years earlier Professor Rossi used that same finding to argue for the uniqueness of the mother-child bond. Mr. Levin cites the importance of research by John Money on the hormonal causes of sex differences. So too did Professor Rossi in 1977, and in a 1979 *Signs* article she comments:

> The important point is that we need to know far more than we do about many body processes, and research in areas like neuroendocrinology and brain neurochemistry may come up with evidence in the coming decade that feminists will have to absorb, some of which I predict will show additional evidence of fundamental differences in brain structure laid down during early fetal development which may carry consequences for sex differentiation during childhood and adolescent development.

Rather than continuing along these lines, let me suggest that instead of refuting a paper written nearly two decades ago, Mr. Levin might find it stimulating to read Alice Rossi's current work. For future articles he may find her a useful reference in support of his position.

WILLIAM JAASKELA
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Having accused feminists of basing their argument on an unproven assumption—the "social causation of sex differences"—Michael Levin proceeds to play the same game. His assumptions may not be on so grand a scale, but they are nonetheless offered as assertions without proof. For example, he offers the "common-sense observation that women are more 'sensitive' than men, and more prone to stress." Mr. Levin, a professional philosopher, does not deign to tell us what he means exactly by "sensitive" or how he measures proneness to stress. Of course, the clever use of the catch-all "common sense" allows him to avoid the responsiblity of explaining what he has said. Another case in point: he blandly asserts that "in certain cases the government forbids an employer to hire a man over a woman even if the employer believes that a man is better for the task at hand. American courts routinely overturn ostensibly reasonable employment requirements of size and weight because of their 'discriminatory impact.' . . ." Once

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again, no proof is given for the assertion, no evidence is offered to support the glib "in certain cases" and "routinely overturn." Has Mr. Levin read the court decisions? Has he examined the so-called "beliefs" of the employers in question? Without supporting evidence these statements are little better than slogans. . . .

These failings in Mr. Levin's method of argument are overshadowed by his most serious offense: intellectual dishonesty, perhaps as much a lack of candor with himself as with his readers. I accuse him of this on two counts. First, whether he wishes to admit it or not, Mr. Levin's prose reveals a shocking bias against women. Let me give just two of the many examples of what I mean. In arguing that "sex-role differentiation" is a constant in human society, he asks the following rhetorical question: "Why do not at least 50 percent of human societies have tough, aggressive women and giggly, chatty men?" Is this what his cursory citation of scientific studies of brain structure and his talk about innate female sensitivity to people was leading up to, the hidden yet obvious assertion that women in every society are "giggly and chatty"? In another context, wishing that feminism would "just go away," he looks to the day when "girls will no longer be made to feel foolish about wanting children, men will no longer have to worry about 'offending' their dates." Note the juxtaposition of "girls" and "men." Does Mr. Levin hope for the day when it will be all right for men to treat their dates like children?

Second: Mr. Levin has a hidden agenda. Ostensibly an attack on feminist doctrine, his article is actually an assault upon all the advances women have made in the last few decades in asserting their rights as full members of our society. At the very start Mr. Levin writes that "if the factual assumption of feminism is wrong, the rest is irrational." Does he mean by this that if the feminist argument lacks coherence, there is then no justification for removing the barriers and prejudices that have deprived women of education, jobs, and equal treatment under the law? Although he never deals openly with this question, Mr. Levin's entire argument indicates a predisposition to see any tampering with social institutions as tantamount to inviting a disastrous collision with nature. Even if the basic differences between men and women are not socially determined, are there not also distinctions which society has erected that cannot be justified on the basis of natural differences? Does Mr. Levin actually believe that women have not been systematically discriminated against in modern Western society? Does he believe that to struggle against such discrimination is irrational? If he does believe these things, I wish he would have been honest enough to admit it.

MARTIN J. NEWHOUSE
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Is Michael Levin attempting to prove that the biological differences of women make them less equal than men? If not, then why does he conclude his strong defense of the biological uniqueness of women with an attack on the legislation and regulation which have just begun to remedy sex-based educational, employment, and social-benefits inequities? . . .

The underutilization of women in science and engineering is one of the most serious legacies that past discrimination and cultural stereotyping have left the nation. Even in an era of well-publicized affirmative-action and equal-employment initiatives, women comprise fewer than 3 percent of the engineers in industry. The proportion of women engineers with a B.S. degree in engineering did not exceed 1 percent until 1972, in part because women could not gain admittance to many engineering schools. . . .

Within the academic marketplace, women still face formidable barriers to promotion to high rank. . . . The National Academy of Sciences reports that in the humanities in 1979, income disparity in favor of men existed at all levels of experience. The median annual salary for men with one year of experience was $17,400; for women, $13,300. For men with twenty-six to thirty years of experience, the me-

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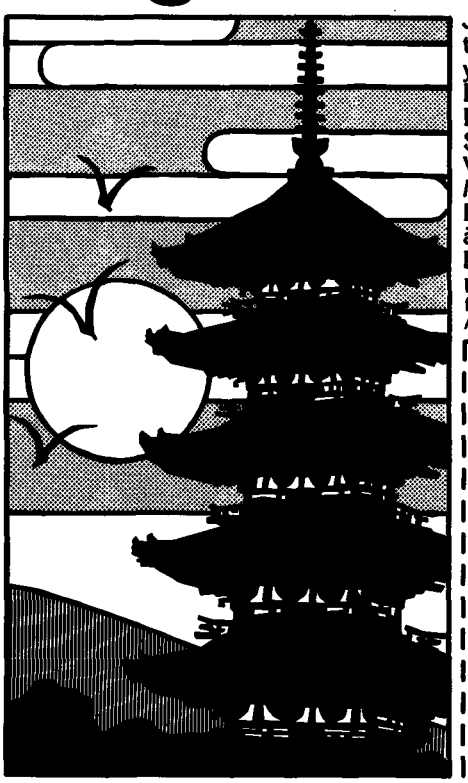

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dian annual salary was $30,200; for women with the same experience the figure was $24,600. Nearly three-fourths of the men were tenured, compared with fewer than half of the women.

Since Mr. Levin objects to change in the curriculum and through the courts, it is difficult to figure out what he would do about the inequities which are objectively demonstrable. The authors of a recent government report, *Science and Engineering Education for the 1980's and Beyond*, advocate development of new teaching materials for junior and senior high schools with special emphasis on the needs of women and minorities. By involving outstanding professionals, including women and minorities, their objective is to change the perception of children that a scientific and engineering world is closed to all but men with advanced academic degrees. Does this approach also qualify as "brainwashing" or "indoctrination," the labels Mr. Levin flashes in his attack on feminists who have argued for similar corrections to the curriculum?

It took a federal court decision to strike down sex-based mortality tables which were used to pay lower insurance benefits to women. The atmosphere created by affirmative-action legislation has brought more women into management, although their numbers are still small and their salaries are considerably lower than men. Without the courts, the Congress, and the public forum in which these ideas are debated, change would not be possible. . . . It would be tragic if voices like Mr. Levin's were to prevail and stop the slow progress toward an improvement in the status of women.

HEDVAH SHUCHMAN
Manager, Science Policy Studies
The Futures Group
Glastonbury, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

People writing about scientific topics ought to make sure they are knowledgeable about and understanding of their subject. Michael Levin attempts to demonstrate that psychological differences between human males and females are due to biological factors. First, he implies that because prenatal testosterone "plays a large role in shaping the central nervous system of fetuses," we have an explanation of the male superiority in mathematics, spatial ability, and certain other traits. In fact, there is not one shred of evidence that women who were exposed as fetuses to high levels of testosterone surpass other women in these capacities or that men who had abnormally low levels of testosterone as fetuses are inferior to other men. Second, Mr. Levin's statement that "commonsense" observations show "that women are . . . more prone to stress" than men merely serves to demonstrate that Mr. Levin's common sense is precisely 180° out of phase with scientifically established fact: stress diseases are much more common in males than in females. Third, Mr. Levin's assertion that spatial ability is determined by a sex-linked gene reflects his ignorance of the scientific literature. Corley and colleagues, among many others, have shown that family correlation patterns for spatial ability are totally inconsistent with the sex-linkage hypothesis (*Behavior Genetics*, Vol. 10, pp. 211-215, 1980). Finally, Mr. Levin's remarkable claim that sex differences in cognitive ability "are induced by the now-familiar differences between the cerebral hemispheres" leaves one stunned. There is no consensus among researchers regarding the nature of sex differences in human-brain lateralization; some researchers even argue that there is no good evidence for the existence of these differences and some question whether, in any case, psychological differences between the sexes can be explained by possible differences in cerebral asymmetry. These questions are discussed by Jeanette McGlone and by commentators on her article in a recent issues of the *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (Vol. 3, pp. 215-263, 1980).

My own view is that the scientific evidence is more consistent with the postulate that human neuropsychological sex differences are partially due to biological factors than that they are not, but, in addition to the fact that this is far from proved, we have little understanding of the genetic and hormonal mechanisms by which such differences might be mediated, how these variables might affect the development of the brain, the extent to which environmental factors condition the organization of the cerebral hemispheres, or the relationship between neurological and psychological variations. Mr. Levin would have his readers believe that the answers to these questions are already in and that there is no room for discussion, a claim that is so far from reality as to be plain silly.

It is difficult to keep in mind that Mr. Levin is supposed to be a philosopher with expertise in the foundations of logic, since he contradicts himself with regard to almost every major issue he addresses. Is it a central tenet of contemporary feminism that all psychological differences between males and females are due to sociological factors or do leading contemporary feminists admit innate differences? Mr. Levin asserts both. Does Mr. Levin support a sex-blind social system where equal opportunities would be available to all people regardless of gender or does he support a sex-discriminatory system? He attacks Betty Friedan for demanding equality of opportunity in the face of possible biologically-based differences on the ground that a society offering such opportunities would be "concocted in an empirical vacuum," but spends almost half his article attacking sex-discriminatory programs on the ground that they are "profoundly illiberal and must inevitably lead to ever greater degrees of coercion."

I concur with Mr. Levin that providing members of a designated group with selective advantages and imposing on members of other groups selective restrictions is inherently pernicious and highly destructive, but in opposing a social system that allocates opportunities on the basis of group identity, one necessarily supports a society that is group-blind with respect to the opportunities available. Mr. Levin rejects the universal set. Possibly, he might try to escape the logical bind by claiming that it is not sex discrimination *per se* that he opposes, but only a form from which men suffer and women benefit. Perhaps he would suggest that the ideal society is one in which both sexes suffer disadvantages if they seek sex-atypical educations and occupations and derive advantages if they seek those that are sex-typical. However, the profundity of illiberality is just as great regardless of which groups gain or lose with respect to any sets of social opportunities. If Mr. Levin opposes "profoundly illiberal" social structures that "inevitably lead to ever greater degrees of coercion," then he is compelled by logic to reject any system, regard-

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less of its characteristics, that offers opportunities in accordance with group identity and is inconsistent in simultaneously rejecting one where group characteristics are irrelevant.

Does Mr. Levin believe that empirical data must be taken into account in devising social programs, or, in contrast, does he believe the data may be ignored? He says that "moral prescriptions and social programs cannot be concocted in an empirical vacuum," but he also says that "we may dismiss the accounts of exceptional women, for at issue is what is true of men and women on the whole." Evidently, the "factual question" *is* to be ignored when facts pertain to differences among women or differences among men. On the one hand, Mr. Levin faults Betty Friedan for disregarding the data and, on the other, avers that empirical evidence with respect to within-sex variations is to be dismissed!

It should be noted, also, that Mr. Levin's dismissing of the data is a considerably more serious omission than that of Betty Friedan. For those psychological processes for which the sexes have been found to differ, the variations *within* sexes are of much greater magnitude. Of all the variation among people on such behavioral functions, only 10-15 percent is due to differences between the sexes, the remainder being due to differences among people of the same sex. Further, the current evidence strongly points to a substantial genetic determination of within-sex variations, whereas, in contrast, the evidence is much weaker for a genetic determination of the between-sex difference.

Were reality different, at least some of the contradictions in which Mr. Levin enmeshes himself could be resolved. In particular, if females did not exist at all, we could have a society that was neither sex-blind nor sex-discriminatory since the whole dimension of gender would be null. Given Mr. Levin's implied characterization of women as "giggly" and "chatty," it is not an unreasonable inference that this mono-sexual society is precisely his ideal. Were the world composed of "tough" and "aggressive" males, there would be no one around like me to giggle at Mr. Levin's illogic.

JERRE LEVY
Department of Behavioral Science
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Michael Levin has his "whys" confused. The question is not, why are men and women different, or even, why can't we accept that they are, but rather, why is a woman less valued than a man?

Innate aggression and physical courage lead our "male animals" to value and cultivate these two traits through competition. Has this competitive edge so shaded their perception of the "weaker sex" that men denigrate women's strengths for their own greater glory or are they simply blind to them as they would be to alien sensitivities?

It is this denigration, this second-class role, that women are finally renouncing. . . .

Nancy Green Sher

Louisville, Kentucky

To the Editor of Commentary:

Feminists do not seek to blind children or anyone else to gender differences. Men and women will never be the same, if for no other reason than their unique physiologies. What feminists seek to do is eliminate artificial differences—sex-role stereotypes which limit women's opportunities because they are smaller or because they bear children, and which deny men the chance to enter traditionally "feminine" roles because of their masculinity. Job quotas and reverse discrimination are and will be necessary evils until such time as opportunities in the work force are equal for everyone, regardless of gender, race, religion, or any number of external variables. There simply is no other way to make up for the lost years. . . .

Size and weight requirements have been used routinely as a means of keeping women, Hispanics, and Orientals out of the work force. In a society as mechanized and automated as ours, there is no reason an average-sized woman with proper training cannot function effectively as a police officer or a fire fighter or a bus driver or a brick mason or a telephone repairman. Since most of the support equipment in the work force was designed for men, some modification has been necessary. . . . In many cases equipment modifications brought about by women entering the work force, such as hand carts to carry heavy tool kits, have resulted in a better work environment and fewer injuries to both sexes. . . .

Regarding Mr. Levin's discussion of "equal pay for work of equal value," it should be pointed out that women do not do the work of men because they generally are not hired for "men's" jobs—not because they are incapable of doing the work. Within the U.S. government, the lowest level jobs (and consequently the lowest paying jobs) are held overwhelmingly by women. . . . These jobs were originally classified into the lower levels not because of their relative value, but because they were held by women, who did not support families and who therefore needed less money. That is why a man who sits behind the wheel of a forklift and moves boxes in a storeroom makes more money than a typist who sits in front of a word-processing machine and produces 120 documents a day. That is why "equal pay for work of equal value" is a valid goal of feminists. "Value" and "brawn" are not necessarily equated.

Regarding education, as long as the world is sexist and racist, it *is* unacceptable to let children draw their own conclusions, (i.e., it's OK to be sexist and racist) from what they see. Introducing them to female doctors and male nurses counteracts some of the effects of discrimination they see every day; if we ever hope to eradicate stereotyping based on gender, we must start with our children. This is one reason feminists protest the preponderance of men in history books—it is a *result* of stereotyping. There have been comparatively few women military, political, and business leaders in the world because women have never had the opportunity to lead. Many of those who did make it have been omitted from history because they were female. . . .

If by wishing "freedom and rationality" to return to the occupational marketplace Mr. Levin means that employers would once again be free to hire more men, promote them fast, pay them more, and give them better training and more responsibility simply because of their gender or their physical strength, he should know that millions of men and women are committed to fighting for the rest of their lives to insure that equal opportunity is a reality for everyone. The world Mr. Levin hopes fervently for and justifies passionately is gone forever, and we are all of us, women and men, better off for it.

D.A. Burnette

Burke, Virginia

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Michael Levin's tone is cynical and angry and his brief references to scientific studies do not support his arguments, but rather are only an unsuccessful attempt to add credibility to his article. Scientific evidence of genetic differences between men and women does not support Mr. Levin's arguments and innuendos that such differences preclude women from performing as well as men in a broad range of activities. Nor does it follow, as Mr. Levin implies, that the goal of eliminating discrimination based on sex involves a repressive attack on positive American values. Discrimination based on sex, like discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, and other similar categories, has been recognized as harmful and in many situations made illegal, not because of some altruistic theory, but because (1) people are being harmed by such discrimination; (2) the people harmed are usually in a position of power inferior to those doing the harm; and (3) discrimination does not go away by itself. . . .

At the moment, however, there are so many sexist men and women in America that there exists an uncertain balance between those who believe that sexism is good and those who believe that freedom of choice and equality of opportunity for women are more beneficial values. I believe the trend is in favor of the latter group, but it is a precarious balance. In the past women and their supporters have made great strides toward freedom which were later followed by general repression.

Both sexism and racism seem destined to exist so long as women and blacks occupy inferior positions of economic and political power. Conversely, it is probable that the relatively low level of active anti-Semitism in America derives from the fact that on the average Jews probably occupy positions of economic and political power at least equal to the average anti-Semite.

The continued existence of sexism does not obviate the moral requirement to seek to counteract sexist values. Quite the contrary, if we believe that sexism is harmful we have a responsibility to try to eliminate sex discrimination and limit the extent to which the value of sexism is transmitted and reinforced in American society. . . .

The publication of Mr. Levin's flimsy apology for sexism in no way

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advances the literature on the subject. . . . I cannot imagine that a similar article decrying the efforts of, for example, the Anti-Defamation League would have received other than a quick rejection slip from the editors. . . .

RALPH DAVID SAMUEL
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MICHAEL LEVIN writes:

There are some recurring catchphrases today's feminists proclaim with dreary predictability: "equality of opportunity," "systematic discrimination against women," and "equal pay for equal work." I expected these, and I got them. Yet these shibboleths do not even touch the main issue of my article, which is the question of a coercive movement toward androgyny.

Equality of opportunity is denied women when the law forbids a woman to apply for or hold a position. With a few exceptions—laws against women in combat and in firehouses are sensible and necessary—I am all for striking down such laws, and hence for "equality of opportunity." Who would not be?

Somehow, though, that phrase has been stretched to mean imposing hiring and admissions requirements on everyone in sight. I not only oppose "equality of opportunity" in this perverted sense, I think it is clear how the perversion came about. If you assume that men and women are the same, you will interpret inequality of outcome as evidence of inequality of opportunity (in something like the standard sense) somewhere along the line. Quotas then seem reasonable, because all they do is insure outcomes that would have transpired naturally had "equality of opportunity" been observed. But, as I stressed in my article, if the assumption is wrong, i.e., if men and women are different, conditions of equal opportunity will not bring about a unisex world.

"Systematic discrimination against women" is a myth. If it means that men and women occupy different roles, devotees of this expression are begging the question. If it means that women have been beaten, lynched, impoverished, and herded into ghettos to keep them in place, it is plain nonsense. But if it means that construction workers have been known to scrawl rude sayings on fences, or that an assistant professor suspects that she was denied tenure because she is a woman—is this "systematic discrimination" worth turning our society upside down for?

I myself think that virtually all the civil-rights legislation of the recent past impermissibly violates freedom of association and contract. But even if you do not agree with me—even if you believe that the good done by laws forbidding discrimination in employment outweighs their harm—you must surely agree that these laws have been abused. The coercive push toward a unisex society is the principal abuse, and has nothing to do with forbidding discrimination.

The slogan "equal pay for equal work" can be depended on to elicit assent—who would deny that a boss ought to pay a man and a woman the same for answering telephones? But consider what can be, and has, slipped by under this slogan: (a) the government enforces the obligation; (b) the government determines when work is equal (there can be slipshod and careful telephone answering, after all); (c) the government determines when different work is of equal value. Consider the totalitarian potential in (c) alone. Is it fair that brawny bricklayers make more than secretaries? In a free market the question answers itself: yes, because work is worth the price it fetches. The only alternative is an authority which enforces its own edicts about wages, and it is this alternative that feminists, in their quest for sameness, prefer.

To Frederick Butzen, whose letter distills these self-same clichés, I say only: the government's abuses are not the result of greed. Bureaucrats who forbid girlie calendars in factory locker rooms are idealists who believe in what they are doing. That is why they are so dangerous.

To Iris Mitgang: Since chairs are not known to be careful readers, I excuse your saying that I called men superior in my article. I did not; I said they differ from women. Since the difference involves, in part, a greater readiness to use force, I would welcome a government of pacifist women if our friends in Moscow would do so as well. I had hoped I wouldn't have to hear about the Nazis, and the Jews of

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Germany, but, alas, it seems this was not to be. Actually, there are studies comparing blacks, Jews, and Orientals on verbal ability, spatial visualizing ability, numerical ability, and IQ which should be more widely known, especially by anyone who takes differential performance as proving discrimination. I'm the one who wants to open doors to "everyone with the ability." Feminists don't: they want quotas and re-education to homogenize the traffic in advance.

To Edith U. Fierst: I suppose house painters earn more than nurses because those who hire house painters value their services more, or because house painters drive harder bargains. If you think this is unfair, you are free to give part of your income to the nurses' union, paint your house yourself, and remonstrate with those who do hire house painters. Whether to endure these inconveniences is indeed a hard question to answer. Should it be answered by the government?

To Edward Cline: Your letter gives a chillingly realistic sense of the ugly impulses behind prattle about "the risks we have to take." I have had such conversations as you relate, some of them with philosophers and editors who tell me they prize liberty and pluralism. Perhaps some good may come of the preposterous ukases you describe. Young readers, struck by the discrepancy between what they see around them and the black, female (handicapped?) weightlifters of their workbooks, will come to disdain the authorities who impose this rubbish. Of course, the longer-term consequences of a general contempt for adult authority by the young are not pleasant to contemplate.

To R. K. Becker I can only say "hear, hear." You are quite right that sex-role differentiation would be important even if it were based only on convention. Without it, our sexual and emotional lives would be impoverished: men and women look for complementarity in each other. I'm glad that someone has had the sense and nerve to say it. While I agree that no amount of "conditioning" (a word that feminists, who do not understand it, should not use) can make people think that ice cream tastes like steak, great damage can be done by drumming the message into their heads that there is no difference between men and women, and making them feel guilty if they continue to find a difference. I am confident that any psychologist brave enough to inquire will find that liberated parents who inflict their liberation on their children do great harm, for a strong sense of self cannot emerge without a strong sense of one's own gender.

To Ruth S. King: Another note of thanks for reminding us all of who really has a hidden agenda. There is indeed a firm connection between feminism and all sorts of left-wing causes, which always show up at feminist hootenanies. I suspect that many feminists today tend to follow Marx because only Marxists have an "explanation" of the family which does not root it in inexpungible human emotions.

To Grace Rubin-Rabson: I much appreciate professional confirmation of my gleanings from the psychological literature. I appreciate its public statement as well.

To William Jaaskela: I thank you for informing me of Alice Rossi's second thoughts, and I welcome her back to the fold. (It is not clear, however, either from your citations or from Professor Rossi's recent article in the Autumn 1980 *Signs*, just how much she is willing to retract her original "androgynous ideal.") I picked the older essay because several sources had recommended it to me as a "feminist classic" written by someone with good academic credentials. More important, the views therein, whether or not Professor Rossi still holds them, do underlie the feminism of the 80's. Had I culled more up-to-date citations from Jane O'Reilly, Robin Morgan, or Victoria Geng, I would have been criticized for attacking "popular overstatements" of feminism. Feminists are, indeed, rather easy to rankle: the same issue of *Signs* drums Germaine Greer out of the corps for saying that men are crazier than (hence different from) women.

To Martin J. Newhouse: First, some lexicography: "girl" means "pubescent human female"; "man" means "adult human male." Actually, the army's lowering of requirements and a federal court's elimination of the New York Fire Department's requirement that a fire fighter (né fireman) be able to carry heavy weights quickly are matters of public record that *illustrate* my main point. Only limitations of space prevent chapters, verses, and statistics. I agree that my point about different cultures was poorly phrased: it should have run, "Why do not 50 percent of human societies have jokes and proverbs attributing toughness to women . . .?" I should have thought my agenda was quite overt. All the legislation forcing women to be admitted, hired, promoted, paid, and compensated for jobs they have never held should be struck down. If we must have anti-discrimination legislation, it should require firm evidence of intent. I also think the media should stop their barrage of unisex propaganda, although of course I do not demand any laws to this effect. As for "society's barriers," this is just a tendentious way of saying that unconstrained human choices have a certain net result.

To Hedvah Shuchman: Like Mr. Newhouse, you never address the conflict between liberty and regulations to "remedy" alleged discrimination. Since last I heard, women have the legal right to be engineers, so what is this matter of "*under*utilization"? If you are scandalized by the figures, you should remember that women simply do not, in general, have the mathematical aptitude of men. (See, for example, the new research on mathematical ability reported in *Science* magazine, December 12, 1980.) Once again: it is only permissible to stop the state from forbidding a woman to participate in some activity, or to compensate the subject of a *clear* wrong from the pocket or hide of the *wrongdoer*. The myriad regulations now bedeviling us meet none of these criteria.

One must admire your gameness in dodging the issue of coercion. You speak of federal legislation "encouraging" employers to "take positive steps." That's right—and a Mack truck bearing down on me at 60 mph encourages me to take positive steps to get off the highway. By the way, those oft-cited statistics about pay fail to reflect such variables as the subjects women tend to teach, and the well-documented demographic phenomenon that professional women, like women generally, tend to marry "up," hence have to settle for jobs in the artificially competitive urban markets in which their successful academic husbands usually live.

Finally, those new teaching materials that reflect the "needs" of womenandminorities (why not make it one word?) certainly are indoctrination—see Mr. Cline's letter. Their "advocacy" by the gov-

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ernment will almost certainly collide with academic freedom and freedom of expression.

To Jerre Levy: At the heart of your letter is a sentence which does not make sense: "Mr. Levin rejects the universal set." You go on to call this "a logical bind," but I have no idea what you are talking about, and I rather doubt that you do. You twice ask for my attitude on equal opportunity, and I say again that there should, of course, be no laws forbidding anyone to hold any position, except those in which "coeducation" would endanger society (such as much of the military). Talk of the "social system" discriminating is, again, pure reification: what the social system "does" is simply the unintended result of millions of independent decisions. The social system doesn't promote or impede opportunity. A little girl who never wanted to be a doctor has not been kept out of medical school; to think otherwise is to confuse coercion with causation.

This letter does occasion an important epistemological point. The scientific evidence I cited was not intended to *prove* that men and women differ. I take it as perfectly obvious to anyone not blinded by ideology that they do. The scientific data *explain* the difference by supplying the underlying mechanisms. Physics cannot convince a skeptic that grass is green; what physics does do is explain why, as everyone knows, grass is green. Indeed, introducing science at all risks making it seem that gender differences are less than self-evident. (The reader will now have to evaluate our competing claims for himself. In addition to the material cited in the letters of Mr. Jaaskela and Miss Rubin-Rabson, I recommend Tranick and Adamson's *Babies as People,* and the recent research on mathematical ability I mentioned above. I note also that none of my correspondents takes issue with the material on behavior or motivation.)

I brought science in, somewhat reluctantly, since feminists *don't* accept common observation, and they've convinced a lot of other people not to. So perhaps "science" will do it. One has to wonder, though, about the evidential rules of a game in which the observations of the whole human race don't count.

To Nancy Green Sher: I must ask you why you think female virtues have been denigrated. The

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womanly virtues of kindness, selfless love, and civilizing influence are universally exalted. It is the feminists themselves who are the ones now scrambling to get off the pedestal.

To D.A. Burnette: If this letter did not exist, I would have had to invent it—it assumes that role differences are artificial, it completely muddles notions like opportunity and equality, and it advocates quotas. I find a touch of megalomania, though, in the idea that size and weight requirements are "routinely used" to keep women (and Hispanics!) out of certain jobs. Look, Miss/Mr. Burnette, you have to be *big* and *tough* to be a fireman or a soldier. That's why those requirements are in place. The assumption that people violate their own self-interest in order to spite you is, literally, paranoid.

To Ralph David Samuel: Since you use "sexism" and its cognates seven times, you must know what it means. I don't. If it is the idea that men and women differ, and people's uncoerced behavior will reflect this difference, the doctrine is true, and hardly an opprobrious epithet. If it is the idea that women are so morally inferior to men they should be denied the legal right to vote or apply to medical school, the doctrine is extinct in these parts (even if good for a daily two-minute hate session). Perhaps "sexism" is just a substitute for thinking.

The Holocaust

To the Editor of Commentary:

The most intriguing detail of Lucy S. Dawidowicz's "Lies About the Holocaust" [December 1980] is the report that Noam Chomsky is among the most vigorous defenders of Robert Faurisson's inalienable right to propagate, from a university chair, the neo-Nazi lie that the Holocaust is a Zionist invention. This is, I think, the same Chomsky who in countless speeches over a decade ago explicitly denied to proponents of our involvement in Vietnam the right to free speech anywhere, and in a book called *American Power and the New Mandarins* (1968) wrote that "by accepting the presumption of legitimacy of debate on certain issues, one has already lost one's humanity." Apparently, since he takes an "agnostic" view on the question of whether or not the Jews of Europe really were murdered, Chomsky does not fear that his "humanity" is endangered by neo-Nazism. Or has he recently become a convert to Millite liberalism, one whose zeal for free speech swells in proportion to the anti-Zionism of the speaker?

Edward Alexander
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

To the Editor of Commentary:

I wish to take exception to the distorted picture of Harry Elmer Barnes presented by Lucy S. Dawidowicz in "Lies About the Holocaust." I cannot reconcile the Barnes whose many books I used over the years, both as an undergraduate and graduate student, with Mrs. Dawidowicz's characterization of him as "a fanatical Roosevelt hater," "shrill, irresponsible, and irrational," "guru to . . . neo-Nazi cranks and crackpots," a writer with the "shamelessness of a habitual liar."

Barnes (1889-1968) was a most respected sociologist and a prolific writer and editor of some twenty-five books. His books were solid, substantial, scholarly—models of clear, concise presentations of sociological thinkers and their doctrines. One does not disparage scholarly excellence because a writer "produced no original scholarly work but synthesized information," or because one does not like his views on the origins of World War I, Pearl Harbor, and American participation in World War II.

Post-World War I revisionism was in some measure a product of widespread disillusionment. The gap between the idealism of Wilson (the Fourteen Points) and the Treaty of Versailles (a product of the intractability of Georges Clemenceau and Lloyd George) was great, leading to a rejection of both the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations by the United States Senate, and a revaluation of the role of the Allied powers by some American scholars.

Barnes's *The Genesis of the World War*, a book of some 750 pages, appeared in 1926—an original piece of historical writing, not "synthesized information." Barnes did not exonerate Germany from a share of the war guilt, but gave what he considered "overwhelming proof" that Serbia, Russia, and France were also guilty. Carl Becker, a prominant historian of the period, characterized the book as "a marvellously straight, swift, cogent presentation of facts and conclusions."

After the rise of Hitler to power, however, a revision of the revisionists became evident. Observing how the Germans were behaving during World War II, critics found it relatively easy to denounce Barnes for doubting that the Germans were likewise culpable and responsible for World War I.

Mrs. Dawidowicz gives no indication that there were opponents of American participation in World War II other than Nazis, cranks, and crackpots. Among those expressing their opposition were: Charles A. Beard, John Dewey, Norman Thomas, Chester Bowles, Oswald Garrison Villard, Harry Emerson Fosdick, William Benton, Robert Maynard Hutchins, and others. . . .

The full and definitive story of Pearl Harbor has yet to be written, [but] there is considerable evidence to cast doubt upon the official version: a sudden, unanticipated, treacherous attack which precipitated the United States into the war. . . .

According to Barnes and others, President Roosevelt had already committed the United States to war by the massive supply of guns, arms, munitions, and destroyers to Britain. Tension had been steadily building up between the United States and Japan as a result of the embargo on shipments of oil and scrap iron to Japan. The United States had broken the Japanese code and was familiar with the operations of the Japanese fleet in the Far Pacific. Roosevelt expected that hostile action of the Japanese fleet would bring the United States directly into the war. . . .

A careful reading of Barnes's pamphlets—*Was Roosevelt Pushed Into the War by Popular Demand in 1941?* (1950) and *The Struggle Against Historical Blackout* (undated but published about the same year)—reveals a rational presentation of his position, with no more, perhaps even less, shrill animosity and hostility toward his opponents than Mrs. Dawidowicz exhibits in her own article. . . .

The only real case Mrs. Dawidowicz can make against Barnes stems from the writings of his last few years. Here he seems to have become obsessed with his cause and have lost his sense of rationality in arguing, among other things, as Mrs. Dawidowicz reports, that the atrocities of the Allies were greater than those of the Nazis. This is deeply to be regretted.

Mrs. Dawidowicz makes much of

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the neo-Nazi ideology of the Revisionist Convention, sponsored by the Institute of Historical Review in 1979, and dedicated to the memory of Barnes. . . . [But] Barnes cannot be held accountable or responsible for those acting in his name after his death.

It would be a grave injustice to belittle Barnes's vast sociological writings and to denigrate his serious efforts to bring greater insight into the causes of World War I and of the American involvement in World War II and to remember him only as "shrill, irresponsible, and irrational" and a "habitual liar.". . .

WILLIAM ISAACS
Bronx, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In an article that was, for the most part, properly indignant about Nazi apologists, Lucy S. Dawidowicz makes the disastrous mistake of likening revisionist interpretations of World War II to the revisionist historiography of the 1920's. Although there were some historians who became revisionists of both wars, out of a continuing commitment to American isolationism, critical differences should be noted between the two revisionist schools. World War I revisionists, unlike those writers Mrs. Dawidowicz condemns, were at their best discriminating and balanced scholars. Sidney Fay was not an apologist for imperial Germany, but someone who recognized the bias of wartime polemics and postwar memoirs. He studied the war's outbreak by focusing on the diplomatic blunders and political indiscretions that both sides had committed. Contrary to Mrs. Dawidowicz's comments, Fay was in fact more critical of Germany's role in the war than of England's, but he did stress the shared responsibility of *all* the major belligerents, and of two minor ones, Austria and Serbia, in igniting the fatal fuse.

As I tried to show in a review article for the *American Spectator* in 1978, Fritz Fischer has not "put to rest" the argument about responsibility for World War I, as Mrs. Dawidowicz states. . . . In point of fact, Fischer has revived a controversy which Raymond Aron and Gerhard Ritter had tried to settle in the 1950's by documenting the series of blunders among the original belligerents leading to the war. Fischer, in contrast, presents the eruption of struggle as the premeditated working-out of Germany's pre-1914 dream of world empire. Unhappily for his thesis, this interpretation rests on little more than conjecture and attempts at impugning his opponents as German nationalists. Fischer does cite annexationist German war plans constructed, among others, by Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, but fails to remind his readers of two obvious facts. These plans were produced during the war itself, and their aims were hardly more arrogant than the plans then being devised in other wartime chancelleries. Far from establishing a historiographical consensus, Fischer has evoked critical comments from a variety of scholars—e.g., Egmont Zechlin, Golo Mann, and Joachim Remak—few of whom can be accused of harboring affection for Kaiser Wilhelm.

I have raised these points because of a persistent tendency among American scholars, including Mrs. Dawidowicz, to extrapolate hastily from Nazi behavior to the general outlines of German history. Often this tendency has expressed itself as indiscriminate Teutonophobia, which has actually blurred, not dramatized, the distinctness of Nazi brutality within the context of German history. A.J.P. Taylor, a reinterpreter of Hitler whom I find as offensive as does Mrs. Dawidowicz, can trivialize the Nazi experience partly because of his long-publicized anti-German feelings. Hitler, Taylor assures us, was *tout simplement* a German leader: no more and, in some ways, even less destructive of international order than the German regime in 1914. To me, however, it seems the two wars did develop out of substantially different causes and involved German governments with differing degrees of responsibility. And even at the risk of being called a political extremist, a charge that Mrs. Dawidowicz levels at Fay and his disciples, I shall continue to believe that the German imperial government in 1914, unlike the Nazi state in 1939, was colossally inept, but not brutally bellicose.

PAUL GOTTFRIED
Rockford College
Rockford, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Lucy S. Dawidowicz's article with interest. Unfortunately, her statement that "the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, working together with Melbourne's Jewish community, mounted an exhibit on the Holocaust" is incorrect. The Australian Holocaust Exhibition was conceived and initiated by the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Committee in Melbourne. It was organized in conjunction with the Jewish cultural center "Kadimah," the Jewish Heritage Committee of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies, the Australian Jewish Museum, and others. . . . The Victorian Council of Churches also agreed to cooperate. The exhibition received wide press coverage and was very well attended: hundreds of students from both Jewish and non-Jewish schools visited it. Literature about Jewish life in Eastern Europe before the Nazi era and about Nazi atrocities and extermination camps was disseminated. In addition to the photographs, a special film was shown, in which survivors of ghettos and death camps described their experiences.

The exhibition was a good occasion to remind and inform the Australian community about the Nazi plan to destroy the European Jews.

At no time did the German Embassy take part in organizing or subsidizing the exhibition, nor were they asked to do so. The Holocaust Exhibition will be shown in other cities and towns in Australia, and the film is to be shown in other countries as well.

JACOB KRONHILL
Melbourne, Australia

LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ writes:

First of all, a correction. It turns out that there are two Revisionist presses. One, using a New Jersey post-box, is supported by the German-American National Congress and has promoted Butz's book. A second, using a Brooklyn post-box, has published Barnes's "revisionist" essay and the Morris book which accorded the neo-Nazi deniers of the Holocaust legitimacy as historians.

William Isaacs is too zealous in defense of the early Barnes. I did not address myself to the general politics of World War II isolationism, but only to Barnes's malevolent hysteria. Mr. Isaacs might well ponder why the galaxy of notable isolationists headed by Charles Beard himself never admitted Barnes to their company. Even as early as 1940, Barnes had already discredited himself.

Paul Gottfried attributes to me

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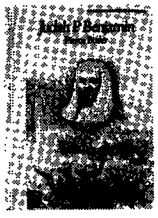

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statements about Sidney Fay that I never made and never would make. Presumably a historian, Mr. Gottfried ought to recognize a particular obligation to be accurate and honest. As for the Fischer controversy, Fischer's chief opponents were Gerhart Ritter and Egmont Zechlin. Ritter, one of Germany's historians of the old school, especially objected because he feared that widespread acceptance of Fischer's view would lower the Germans' sense of their national self-esteem. Zechlin's politics, rather than his historical professionalism, probably account for his anti-Fischer position. For the present, it appears that Fischer's views have prevailed.

"Foreign Policy" Cont.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In a previous letter [November 1980] I stated that *Foreign Policy* had refused to publish a criticism by me of an article by Dimitri K. Simes, "The Anti-Soviet Brigade," which appeared in the magazine's Winter 1979/80 issue. To Mr. Simes's article itself I devoted, in my letter to COMMENTARY, only half a paragraph in which I characterized the article as blatant apologetics for Soviet policies. Now Mr. Simes has written an elaborate answer [COMMENTARY, January 1981] to my reference to his article.

The situation is grotesque: *I* am not allowed to criticize Mr. Simes in *Foreign Policy*, while Mr. Simes is allowed to attack, in COMMENTARY, my reference to his article without answering my specific criticisms.

"Nothing in the article would justify" my characterization of it, Mr. Simes contends in his COMMENTARY letter, for (according to him) he says there that "appreciation of the seriousness of the Soviet challenge 'is not only entirely legitimate but probably long overdue.'" But if one turns to his text in *Foreign Policy*, one finds (p. 39):

> Thus, two factors are behind the shift to an alarmist view of the Soviet Union in the United States. Their appreciation is not only entirely legitimate but probably long overdue.

In other words, what is overdue in Mr. Simes's opinion is not an appreciation of the Soviet challenge itself but an appreciation of the factors behind the alarmist (!) view of the Soviet regime which some in the United States hold. In his reply to me he has not simply distorted what he originally wrote but has changed its meaning to the opposite.

To disprove my characterization of his article, Mr. Simes also quotes from it what is "uncomplimentary about the Kremlin's behavior," in his opinion. (Well, hardly anyone in the West is *only* complimentary about the "Kremlin's behavior.") Yet many of these admissions are intended by Mr. Simes solely to show that the trends of the past continue into the present, and therefore do not constitute an argument against "détente." Thus, "Soviet diplomacy of force is also hardly a new development, as the citizens of Czechoslovakia and Hungary can attest," Mr. Simes reassures his readers in *Foreign Policy*:

> Nor have Soviet domestic controls been significantly tightened up in the 1970's. The harshness of punishment has not become more severe. The number of Soviet Jews who have been allowed to emigrate has reached unprecedented levels.

What is the moral?

> If many Americans feel cheated by détente, the Russians are not responsible for their illusions. Euphoria in the United States was not of Soviet making. On the contrary, the Soviet leadership, despite all the champagne drinking and exchange of pleasantries with President Nixon and Kissinger, was remarkably frank from the first days of détente about what the new relationship was not.

Since Mr. Simes nevertheless concludes, quoting an allegedly unreported dictum by Henry Kissinger, that "détente [must] remain an imperative," to which there is "no credible alternative," surely Mr. Simes's reassurances above *are* apologetics for Soviet policies.

Mr. Simes contends that his article appeared before the massive flow of Soviet troops into Afghanistan on December 24, 1979, though the article itself is misleading: Mr. Simes writes that Marshal Matvey Zakharov once did in the 1973 war against Israel what "General Ivan Pavlovsky is currently doing in Afghanistan." Had it been clear from the article that Mr. Simes intended to defend as détente the Soviet war in Afghanistan under General Pavlovsky only until the massive roll-in of Soviet troops occurred, I would have gladly specified this.

To demonstrate his attitude after December 24, 1979, Mr. Simes cites in his COMMENTARY letter some remarks he made in the Washington *Post Magazine* last July, as quoted in a column by Rudy Maxa. On July 6, Rudy Maxa wrote about Mr. Simes:

> His well-enunciated views of America's relations with his homeland—most recently in an essay in *Foreign Policy* magazine—have sometimes irritated other émigrés and hard-line Americans who prefer to portray the Soviet Union as a power-hungry, predatory bear. Simes contends the Soviet Union is "essentially another superpower looking for a place under the sun, as uncomfortable as that may be to some Americans."

I would regard this description of Mr. Simes's attitude, six months *after* the massive Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, as coinciding (in everything except terminology) with my stated view of Mr. Simes's article in *Foreign Policy*.

On July 13, another column by Rudy Maxa quoted Mr. Simes as saying "America's reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan only reinforced Moscow's feeling that the U.S. is hostile"; so, to "hurt the Soviets where it really counts," Mr. Simes proposes in particular "a genuine solution of the Palestinian problem." (!) This is like proposing to punish a shark by throwing it into the ocean.

As a Soviet political émigré I requested space from *Foreign Policy* because Mr. Simes attacks Soviet political émigrés. Mr. Simes now says that he has "done nothing of the sort." Yet his article does include in the ranks of the "anti-Soviet brigade," the target of his attack, "the increasingly vocal and influential community of Soviet political émigrés" (p. 33). No exception or reservation of any kind is made.

Finally, it is disingenuous of Mr. Simes to complain that "instead of addressing our substantive differences, Mr. Navrozov resorts to distortions." How can I address "our substantive differences" and how can the public judge which of us "resorts to distortions," if *Foreign Policy* gives space to Mr. Simes only?

LEV NAVROZOV

New York City

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2) 7.1% (1970s)	(7.9)	5.0	11.7
3) 14.0% (1980s est.)	(41.2)	(33.0)	(28.8)
4) 10.0% (?)	(24.0)	(13.4)	(7.9)

*Investment held 7 2 years.

Take a close look at line 3 in the chart above. It shows what happens to an investor who doubles his money in 7.2 years (the average holding period for stocks).

As you can see, at a 14% inflation rate, the investor would experience a *real loss of 33%* under current tax laws.

Now suppose inflation were to drop to 10% (as we all hope it will). Line 4 of the chart shows that our investor would still have a *13% real loss* after taxes.

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2) 1975	49%	4	23.2
3) 1977	49%	13	54.8
4) 1979	28%	46	201.1
5) 1980 (10 Mos.)	28%	89	469.0

As you can see, when the capital gains tax was raised from 25% to 49%, there was a staggering decrease in new stock offerings. And, when the tax was lowered in 1979, that trend reversed, and the number of new offerings (and new jobs) began to grow – just as expected.

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The Election & the Evangelicals

Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab

SINCE last year's presidential campaign many political observers have expressed deep concern over the growing political power of orthodox Christian groups in this country. According to one election scenario, it was the evangelical TV preachers who played a decisive role in the 1980 election. Not only did they elect Reagan to the Presidency, but, even more alarmingly, they also managed to unseat a number of liberal Senators through a massive, well-financed campaign to brand their targets as un-Christian political sinners. This campaign mobilized the fundamentalist constituency which was so decisive a factor in the conservative tide that swept the nation. And the worst—so the scenario concludes—is yet to come.

This version of recent events, while not entirely inaccurate, contains several crucial flaws. For one thing, it critically misstates the relation between religious beliefs and political attitudes among the evangelicals themselves. For another, it seriously overrates the political strength of organizations like the Moral Majority. And furthermore, it distorts the real meaning of the election results by placing much too narrow and short-sighted a construction on their significance.

Who are the evangelicals? One of their leading periodicals, *Christianity Today*, describes two general categories: "orthodox" and "conversionalist." The orthodox evangelicals are distinguished first by their belief in the literal word of the Bible, and second by their belief that Jesus is divine and the only hope for personal salvation. According to a *Christianity Today* Gallup Poll, taken in 1978, over 40 percent of the adult American population qualifies as evangelical according to orthodox criteria. These are the people commonly referred to as fundamentalists.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET is professor of political science and sociology, and senior fellow of the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. He is the author of many works, including *Political Man* and *Rebellion in the University*. Earl Raab is executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco. Messrs. Lipset and Raab are co-authors of *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America*, an updated paperback edition of which was recently issued by the University of Chicago Press.

The conversionalist evangelicals differ from the orthodox in having had an explicit religious experience in which they asked Jesus to be their personal savior. These are the "born-again" Christians, and they need not be fundamentalists. A little over a third of American adults qualify as conversionalists by this criterion.

Both the fundamentalists and the conversionalists share a commitment to reaching out with the message of salvation and doing their best to convert others (in accordance with the Greek root of the term "evangelical" which means messenger).

All told, then, there are three criteria for qualifying as an evangelical: belief in the literal word of the Bible; a born-again experience; a commitment to proselytizing activity. Various polls taken in 1980 have found that between 20 and 25 percent of American adults qualify on all three counts. This tallies up to over 30 million adults.

Of these 30 million people, about 10 percent are Catholic, about a quarter are black, and a little more than one-third are male. About half live in the South, and about a quarter in the Midwest. Compared with the total population of the United States, they are somewhat less likely to be college graduates or to be in the upper income brackets, though factors of race, region, and sex account for more of this socioeconomic discrepancy than does the religious variable. Male Southern white high-school graduates who are evangelical, for example, will show about the same economic pattern as male Southern white high-school graduates who are not. Still, the fact remains that white evangelicals have an aggregate economic/educational position slightly below that of the rest of the country. If there is an economic pinch, they are the ones who feel it most.

In the areas of political, economic, and social/cultural attitudes, there are some issues on which the evangelical population differs from its non-evangelical neighbors, and others on which it does not. On general economic and political issues, the evangelicals are themselves substantially split. When asked by a Gallup Poll in August, for example, whether there should be more government programs to deal with social problems—a flag-question for philosophical conservatives—slightly over half the country's evangelicals answered in the

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affirmative. Presented with two other such flag-questions—about support of firearm registration and support of ERA—slightly over half the evangelicals again replied positively. In fact, the poll showed that there was no statistical difference between evangelicals and non-evangelicals on attitudes toward firearm registration and nuclear power plants. Some differences were recorded on support of ERA (53-66), and increased defense spending (78-68), but they were by no means of tidal significance.

One lesson to be drawn from these figures is that the term "evangelical" is rather meaningless when interpreting reactions to general political issues. Blacks, for example, are disproportionately evangelical, comprising from one-fifth to one-quarter of the nation's evangelical population. Yet black evangelical attitudes toward the flag-questions differed sharply in the liberal direction from those of their co-religionists. And if the effect of the blacks' religious orthodoxy is submerged by their other life circumstances, then the political effect of the whites' religious orthodoxy cannot be assumed, either. Their other life circumstances must be taken into account as well.

The picture becomes a bit sharper, however, when we come to the area of social and cultural attitudes. The Survey Research Center (SRC) of the University of California once did a study attempting to correlate religious beliefs with attitudes toward the role of the state in economic affairs and toward cultural change, specifically in the area of manners and morals. Members of "fundamentalist" denominations (which include most Baptist groups as well as the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church) were compared with members of "liberal" denominations (Presbyterians and Methodists). In general, the SRC survey found that fundamentalist-church members were somewhat more conservative on economic issues than liberal-church members, although the difference between the two groups tended to flatten out when one adjusted for educational attainment. But in the matter of cultural conservatism, the story was very different. At each educational level, the gaps between fundamentalist-church adherents and others were much greater than in the area of economic attitudes. The overall percentage of cultural conservatives with a high religious commitment was radically larger than the percentage of those with a low religious commitment (62-6).

By the same token, while the total evangelical population is evenly divided on such indicators of political conservatism as state intervention in economic problems, it is fairly united on certain measures of cultural conservatism—especially those directly related to religious belief. Thus, about four out of five evangelicals would require prayers in the public schools and would also bar homosexual teachers from the schools, according to the September 1980 Gallup survey. Only a bare majority of non-evangelicals favor these policies.

WE MUST bear in mind that religious fundamentalism and cultural conservatism have long gone together in this country. Religious identity is, after all, bound up with cultural tradition as part of a total way of life. When the security and status of that way of life appear threatened, its religious and moral content typically become rallying points of defense. Political figures who seem indifferent or hostile to these values will be seen as messengers of wickedness, while those politicians who appeal to them are likely to be invested with an aura of moral goodness.

This has been a recurrent pattern in American history. It was not in 1980 but in 1800 that a pamphlet was published with the ominous title, *Serious Considerations on the Election of a President, and a Voice of Warning to Christians in the Ensuing Election*. It warned that immorality would flourish if Thomas Jefferson were to be elected. Another pamphlet of the period predicted that Jefferson's election would mean "the consequent wonderful spread of infidelity, impiety, and immorality."

A similar note was sounded in a presidential campaign a hundred years later, when William Jennings Bryan ran against McKinley. As James Q. Wilson has noted recently in COMMENTARY,* "Bryan's appeal was as much cultural and moral as economic and political. Fundamentalist Protestants were outraged over the moral decay of urban life . . . Bryan called not simply for a new economic order, but for the purification of society." So, too, in the 1920's the second Ku Klux Klan attracted heavy fundamentalist Protestant support while inveighing as much against immorality as against immigration. As Arnold Rice put it in his history of the KKK: "The 1920's meant 'modernism.' And 'modernism' among other things meant the waning of church influence, the breaking down of parental control, the discarding of the old-fashioned moral code."†

Even more important, "modernism" also meant rapid urbanization and industrialization, which implied in turn that more immigrants would be entering the country and demanding their share of political and economic power. The old world was breaking up and the older established population was losing control. The group most vulnerable to these changes was the fundamentalist Protestants—not because they were fundamentalist, but because they were by region, history, and education the group most rooted in the past, the one with the least capacity for adjusting to change. More significant than their religion and morality was their traditionalism. They were taking a stand against the whole sweep of modernity itself, and all the changes it signified, and in doing so they

* "Reagan and the Republican Revival," October 1980.

† *The Ku Klux Klan in American Politics* (Public Affairs Press, 1962), p. 116.

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spoke for many other traditionalists who did not share their particular religious beliefs.

In different forms and under varying circumstances, this reaction has occurred over and over again in American history. It suggests that political orientation is not just an economic question, but is also a matter of mood. Negative political sentiment has often been generated by a sense of imminent deprivation, or diminishing status on the part of a substantial segment of the population.

Clearly, it was while in such a mood that many Americans, most of them not evangelicals, made their election choices this past fall. Even if their own status was not in question, many voters were registering displeasure at the diminishing status of America itself in the world. They were protesting American humiliation, and not even by another superpower but by a group of petty Middle Eastern despots.

Even the economic issues which dominated the campaign can be seen in this light. For most of us, inflation is more than just a pocketbook issue. It erodes the household budget but it also, more subtly, undermines past achievements. In the same way, the decline in American productivity and the growing superiority of foreign imports over our own products may be seen as issues of national status as much as of economics.

Actually, these issues of status far outweigh the factor of moral backlash that has been the subject of so much worried speculation since the election. Voters in 1980 were certainly expressing revulsion at what they perceived as an assault on traditional moral values. That particular beachhead, however, had been established over a decade before, and the evangelical preachers had been fighting ever since to enlarge it, with no great success. Not until a general backlash mood swept the country, precipitated by such matters as the Persian Gulf and the inflation rate, did the moral issue become an election factor, symbolizing for many the whole downward drift of the nation.

IN ATTEMPTING to ascertain the role of religion in all this, we must bear in mind that frustration over loss of status is concentrated—as it always has been—mainly in that sector of the white Protestant population that is disproportionately evangelical in religious persuasion. This population, as already noted, is much more conservative culturally than the rest of the country. But—except when it feels especially vulnerable or threatened—it is no more conservative politically. Thus, the evangelicals supported Franklin D. Roosevelt heavily in all four elections, they voted for Adlai Stevenson (as Albert Menendez's precinct study shows*) in the same proportion as the rest of the nation—and incidentally in a higher proportion than white non-evangelical Protestants —and they backed Johnson over Goldwater, again in the same overwhelming pattern as the rest of the country. They did not prefer Kennedy in 1960, but this was largely because of the Catholic issue.

The most drastic defection of the white evangelicals from the Democratic party occurred in the late 60's and 70's, in the era of the counterculture. During this turbulent period their votes for Humphrey and McGovern dropped to around one-third or less. Carter, by contrast, received about two-fifths of their vote in 1976, clearly because he was perceived as one of their own by many small-town evangelicals and white Southerners of similar background.

In sum, the traditionalism of the evangelicals does not impinge on their political orientation except when some aspects of modernity radically threaten their status and security. Then, more than others, they tend to express themselves in terms of outraged morality, which comes to symbolize everything they feel they are losing. But while the terms in which they couch their protest may be somewhat different from those of the rest of the country, they are not alone in their larger sense of loss. Certainly they had a lot of company in 1980.

TO BE SURE, it is precisely this recourse to moralistic expression which gives rise to so much apprehension where the evangelical movement is concerned, echoing, as it does, the language of past right-wing extremist movements. But even more ominous than its moralistic terminology to historians of extremism is the connection frequently made in current evangelical doctrine between morality and political ideology. Jerry Falwell, the head of Moral Majority, makes such a link when he says that "What's happening to America is that the wicked are bearing rule." Christian Voice, another of the evangelical-political groups, makes the tie even more explicitly when it proclaims in its official statement of purpose: "We believe that America, the last stronghold of faith on this planet, has come under increasing attack from Satanist forces in recent years . . . that the standards of Christian morality . . . are now under the onslaught . . . launched by the 'rulers of darkness of this world' and insidiously sustained under the ever more liberal ethic."

What is alarming about these pronouncements is their fanaticism. If a political opponent is just wrong, or stupid, or misguided, he can presumably be dealt with in the marketplace of ideas. But when his political opinions arise from deliberate moral wickedness, as this kind of rhetoric implies, a case can be made that he does not deserve to be in the debate at all. It is only one step from here to a full-fledged conspiracy theory, wherein a cabal of evil men conspires secretly to thwart the popular will. This, of course, is the very model of political extremism, waiting only to be completed

* *Religion at the Polls* (Westminster Press, 1977).

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by the designation of one or another ethnic or religious group to represent the cabal.

There is every reason for nerves to jump at such an approach to politics. Inevitably, it recalls groups like the clergymen affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's or the Reverend Gerald Winrod's Defenders of the Christian Faith in the 1930's. Winrod, a fundamentalist preacher whose organization received wide support up until World War II, dwelt on the breakdown of morality in America, denouncing both political parties, though mainly the Democrats, for the country's moral turpitude. In 1938, he entered the Kansas Republican senatorial primary, and received 22 percent of the vote. Much of his animus was directed against the Jews, whom he called "contaminators in the moral realm as well as despoilers in the business field," but he was also strongly anti-black and anti-Catholic.

Today's evangelical groups have made it a point to avoid this kind of hatemongering. Though there is no denying that many evangelicals today are still wary of the Catholics, and have great theological problems with the Jews, and though one may argue further that the Moral Majority's focus on "Christian" values undermines the healthy pluralistic tone of the nation, nevertheless that organization has never even come close to incorporating in its platform the nativism and overt bigotry central to earlier groups. For the Reverend Gerald Winrod to have accepted an award from a national Jewish conclave, as Jerry Falwell recently did, is unimaginable. Indeed, so sensitive is the Moral Majority to Jewish fears that it has requested a "dialogue" with representatives of every major Jewish organization "to make the Jewish community aware that we are not an anti-Semitic group and that we probably are the strongest supporter of Israel in this country."

But it is not just in the absence of overt bigotry that today's evangelical Right has been more moderate than its predecessors. Though its public agenda calls for action on a whole range of domestic and international questions—from socialized medicine to relations with Taiwan and Zimbabwe—its real goals seem to be more limited. One observer, writing in the *Congressional Quarterly*, reports the movement's most concerted lobbying efforts to have been the battles for voluntary school prayer and for an amendment restricting federal intervention in private, mainly Christian, schools* —important issues, but hardly global in their scope. Another observer, writing in the *National Catholic Reporter*, notes that the real core of the platform is Senator Paul Laxalt's Family Protection Act.† This bill, too, confines itself to fairly narrow questions—prayer in the schools, parental review of textbooks, elimination of tax laws requiring married couples to pay more than singles living together, and a number of other sections concerning gay rights and abortions.

In other words, thus far at least, the activity of right-wing evangelical political groups has centered on moral issues rather than on general political ones. As we have seen, these are the only matters on which the positions of the evangelical political groups have reflected the opinions of the general evangelical population. Whenever attempts have been made to stretch the Christian dimension beyond these specific religion-linked issues, they have provoked internal dissension. When, for example, the Harris Poll of October 6, 1980 asked whether it is impossible to be both a political liberal and a good Christian, both the general population and the white evangelical population disagreed overwhelmingly, as did a number of evangelical leaders.

Some, if not all, of these leaders have themselves been careful to make a distinction between moral questions and political ones. Thus, Carl Henry, a leading evangelical theologian, warns against making the jump from "individual spiritual rebirth to assuredly authentic and predictable public policy consequences. . . ." He reminds his hearers that "equally devout individuals may disagree over the best program for achieving common goals."** Making the same point, an editorial in the most widely read evangelical journal, *Christianity Today*, said: "We get the impression that some evangelical lobbies on the political Right as well as liberal lobbies on the Left want us to believe that theirs is the only true Christian position on all issues. How can a policy board of evangelical Christians without access to vast amounts of intricate political data emerge from a meeting and announce that it has arrived at *the* Christian or moral position on lifting sanctions against Zimbabwe, for example?"††

IF THE right-wing evangelicals are not effective in seriously influencing their coreligionists on general political issues, what is the import of their activity? Perhaps they should be thought of not as evangelical groups but as straight right-wing political groups which happen to have an evangelical bent. Perhaps they are best seen organizationally as a part of the so-called New Right network.

That network includes Richard Viguerie and his famous computer in Falls Church, Virginia; Paul Weyrich and his Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress; Terry Dolan and his National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC);

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* Bill Keller, "Lobbying for Christ: Evangelical Conservatives Move from Pew to Polls, But Can They Sway Congress?," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, September 6, 1980, p. 2627.

† James W. Michaels, Jr., "Conservative Christians Spread Influence, Attract Political Attention," *National Catholic Reporter*, August 15, 1980, p. 8.

** "Evangelists Out of the Closet, But Going Nowhere?," *Christianity Today*, January 4, 1980, p. 21.

†† "Getting God's Kingdom Into Politics," *Christianity Today*, September 19, 1980, p. 11.

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and E.E. McAteer and Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus. These loosely knit groups had begun to see the usefulness of the "moral issues" to their cause well before the evangelical preachers got into the political business. In an interview in 1976, Viguerie predicted: "The next major area of growth for conservative ideology and philosophy is among the evangelicals." In a speech four years later at the National Press Club, Viguerie described how he, E.E. McAteer, Robert Billings, and Howard Phillips had devised and successfully implemented a plan to move "preachers-into-politics."

In 1978, Warren Billings, former head of the national Christian Action Coalition, which was then a school lobby, impressed both the evangelicals and the New Right when he used the mailing list of the Old Time Gospel Hour (whose minister was Jerry Falwell) to mobilize a massive letter-writing campaign opposing efforts of the IRS to remove the tax-exempt status of Christian schools which were not racially integrated. Weyrich, an Eastern-rite Catholic, helped form the Christian Voice with one of his close associates as its legislative consultant. Billings and Weyrich, along with Howard Phillips, a Jew, helped to establish the Moral Majority, with Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson at its head. (Billings was at one time both the executive director of the Moral Majority and Weyrich's deputy at the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress.*)

While the sheer amount of time and money expended by this New Right apparatus may indeed have had some practical political consequences, especially in primaries and in targeted congressional districts where name-recognition was a factor, it is important, in attempting to understand the 1980 election, not to overstate that effect. Perhaps the most striking case in point is the results of the presidential vote itself. One of the consistent messages of the politicized preachers was that their evangelical constituency should vote for Reagan. But according to the New York *Times*/CBS election-day poll of voters as they left the booths, a slightly *smaller* percentage of born-again white Protestants (61 percent) than of other white Protestants (63 percent) actually voted for Reagan. A comparison of the 1976 and 1980 votes indicates as well that Carter lost less support among his fellow born-again Protestants than among others. In the election-day study, he retained a larger proportion (82 percent) of white evangelicals who said they had voted for him four years earlier than of other white Protestants (78 percent). This was true of the South as well (where the proportions were 86 percent to 76 percent). The drop-off in Carter's support among Catholics and Jews was somewhat greater than among the born-agains.

RESULTS of the Senate elections cast further doubt on the assumption that the politicized evangelical groups and their New Right allies had much impact on the outcome. NCPAC, as we know, targeted five Northern liberal Democratic Senators—Bayh, Church, Cranston, Culver, and McGovern—and all of them except Cranston were defeated for reelection. But the decline in their vote was *almost identical* with that of the Democratic senatorial candidates in eighteen non-targeted states in the North. The average vote for the five liberal Senators fell from 54.5 percent in 1974 to 48 in 1980; the Democratic senatorial vote in the eighteen other Northern contests declined from 55 percent to 48. As Ronald Roberts, a staff member on the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee, has pointed out, there were conservative victories in states like Wisconsin and New York, where the New Right and the politicized evangelicals were not very active, and liberal victories in states on New Right target lists, like California and Missouri.

It is harder to evaluate the impact of the political/religious Right on House races, given the large number of candidates involved, and the difficulty of measuring the effort actually expended in the various local constituencies. But it may be noted that NCPAC officially endorsed candidates in 103 contests, 57 of whom lost compared to 46 who were elected, a result which parallels closely the party distribution for all 435 House seats.

Strikingly enough, a number of Republican candidates who were supported by fundamentalist groups believe that they were not helped, and may even have been harmed, by these allies. James Abnor, who trounced George McGovern in the South Dakota senatorial race, denies that New Right groups were influential in the state and has even complained to the Federal Election Commission about the unauthorized use of his name by NCPAC. Charles Grassley, who defeated Senator John Culver in Iowa, also feels that the activities of the New Right groups had nothing to do with his success. An aide to Steven Symms, victor over Frank Church of Idaho, told the press that NCPAC had actually helped Church by making "erroneous charges" against him, emphasizing that "if anything, groups such as NCPAC probably hindered Steve Symms." Dan Quayle, who defeated Birch Bayh in Indiana, argued publicly late in the campaign that "New Right groups might cost the Republicans the election" in a number of states.

Statewide opinion surveys reinforce these judgments. In Indiana, polls show that the public had little familiarity with NCPAC slogans, and surveys taken for Symms in Idaho supported the claim that NCPAC, on balance, hurt him by a few percentage points.† Similar conclusions have been

* L.W. Davis, "Conservatism in America," *Harper's*, October 1980, pp. 21-26.

† See Bill Keller, "New Right Wants Credit for Democrats' Nov. 4 Losses but GOP, Others Don't Agree," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 15, 1980, pp. 3372-3373.

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reached by Arthur Miller, a study director of the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center. Basing his judgment on interviews with 10,000 people, Miller believes that the impact of fundamentalist groups on the election outcome was much exaggerated. So too does Louis Harris who argues that the right-wing moralists actually hurt rather than helped the GOP cause, since "the country has moved slightly to the conservative side in opposing nearly all new government regulatory measures on economic matters, but has not moved at all to the Right on the social issues that are such an emotional concern to the die-hard right-wing conservatives."*

So far as the specific role of the TV preachers goes, that too seems to have been overestimated. A national Los Angeles *Times* survey in early September found that, among the half of the nation's evangelicals who watch or contribute to TV preachers, there was about a 3-to-2 majority favoring a constitutional amendment to ban abortion. Evangelicals who do *not* watch or support the TV preachers were evenly split on that question. In each group—the TV-watching and the non-watching evangelicals—three out of five agreed that the ERA was an attack on the American family. Interestingly enough, on general political issues, the watching and non-watching evangelical groups were equally agreed (3-1 in both cases) that the Vietnam war was *not* a noble cause and that the U.S. should maintain its informal relations with Taiwan instead of upgrading them, as advocated by candidate Reagan and organizations such as the Christian Voice and the Moral Majority.

Finally, a survey taken among "likely voters" by NBC News and the Associated Press in early October found that when interviewees were asked whether an election recommendation by a member of the clergy would "make you more likely to vote for that candidate, less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't make a difference," only 3 percent replied "more likely," 8 percent said "less likely," and 88 percent answered, "no difference." Only 3 percent reported having "been asked by a member of the clergy to vote for a specific candidate in this fall's election."

It remains, of course, true, that the area in which the Republicans gained strikingly, the South, is the one in which evangelicals are strongest. But the region has been moving away from the Democratic party ever since 1948, to the point where, by 1981, the GOP holds eleven out of the twenty-two senatorial seats in the once Confederate states. These changes reflect a process of party realignment by Southern whites as they react to the conflict between their dominant economic, cultural, and racial values and those of the national Democratic party.

WHAT all these findings seem to indicate is that the efforts to mobilize a religious constituency for political purposes in America had no measurable effect on the 1980 elections. Instead, the available evidence appears to sustain the thesis that the electoral swing toward conservatism and the emergence of a political evangelical movement were parallel developments which may have been mutually reinforcing rather than related to one another as cause and effect.

The political evangelical groups worked hard at increasing turnout, an activity which was particularly important in the South where less educated evangelicals have relatively low voting records. But the seeming success of such work did not create the Republican landslide. Rather, it reflected the country's conservative political swing, which occurred among all groups—and more, as we have seen, among non-evangelicals than among born-agains.

To fail to acknowledge that the growth of support for the GOP and conservatism is a consequence of general social processes is to give groups like the Moral Majority more credit than they deserve and to run the risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy. If politicians become convinced that the Moral Majority is a decisive force in American life, they are more likely to treat it as such, just to be on the safe side. A more important danger of overestimating the Moral Majority's role is that it can serve to blur the meaning of what *has* happened. For many liberals, who cannot quite believe that the American people, blue-collar and all, have turned conservative of their own free will, it would seem preferable to believe that some sinister manipulative force is at work which has turned large segments of the population into robots. But this is self-delusion—the facts state otherwise.

In attempting to keep the Moral Majority in perspective, it may be useful to acknowledge that moral backlash is not necessarily a pejorative term. If it "belongs" to the evangelicals, this is because other organized religious groups have not claimed it, which may explain why fundamentalist churches, in recent years, have been growing at a 2-percent annual rate while mainstream churches have been declining at 1 percent per annum. Only 40 percent of the adult population attends church regularly as of 1980, the lowest figure recorded since pollsters started inquiring about this subject.

In spite of this decline, however, it is important to remember that with the exception of Ireland, America is still the most religious country in the Western world. In 1977, a sample of youth between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four was asked by Gallup affiliates in different countries whether religion should be "very important" in life. Over 40 percent of the Americans interviewed answered affirmatively, as against less than 10 percent of respondents from Japan, Germany, France,

* Louis Harris, "Reagan Leading as Election Heads into its Final Hours," *ABC News-Harris Survey*, November 2, 1980, p. 2.

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and Great Britain respectively.* Nor are these views limited to the young. Gallup surveys of the entire population have shown that Americans generally are more likely than are the residents of twelve other developed countries to consider religion important. A larger proportion of Americans (94 percent) report a belief in God, and —even more strikingly—the only two countries in which a majority said they believed in "life after death" were the United States (71 percent) and Canada (54 percent). Less than two-fifths of the French, West Germans, and Scandinavians shared this belief.†

Traditional religious belief, moreover, need not be connected to actual church attendance. A 1978 Gallup survey indicated that 41 percent of the American people are unchurched. But while there are doctrinal differences between those who do and those who do not attend church, 76 percent of the unchurched reported that they pray to God and hold to traditional values. Nine out of ten, in both the churched and the unchurched groups, said they would welcome more traditional family ties than now exist. About the same percentage in both groups said they would also prefer greater respect for authority in society.

Given such statistics, the interesting problem is not to account for the revival of backlash moralistic politics, but rather to explain its relative weakness. Part of the explanation undoubtedly lies in the fact that despite the recent rise in membership in orthodox churches, they still have considerably fewer members today than in the 1920's and 1930's. And this decline is linked with numerous structural changes in American society which have weakened the base of the fundamentalist-traditionalist forces. The ranks of farmers in America have fallen greatly since the 20's and 30's, and so has the proportion of small-town residents. At the same time, the number of people engaged in pursuits which require advanced education has increased substantially.

The Americans who "turned Right" in the last election did not by any means agree with the Moral Majority or New Right programs. These Americans were not supporting specific political solutions any more than they usually do. They wanted a government that would more demonstrably reflect their *mood*: a more assertive America on the world scene, and on the domestic front a serious campaign to fight inflation and refurbish American industry. That is the extent of their political conservatism.

Contrary to some allegations, they are not now captive to any political movement, fundamentalist or otherwise, extremist or otherwise. They are shopping. But the attention of these Americans will not be regained by liberal political forces which are more preoccupied with advancing their own conspiratorial explanation of events than with formulating a compelling pragmatic solution to genuine moral and political problems.

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* *Public Opinion 1978* (Scholarly Resources, 1980), p. 339.
† *Public Opinion*, March/May 1979, pp. 38-39.

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Carter's Last Capitulation

Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.

ON JANUARY 19 and 20, James Earl Carter, Jr., then President of the United States, brought to what he evidently regarded as a happy conclusion a disgraceful episode in the history of two nations, Iran and the United States. He persuaded the government of Iran to accept several billion dollars and various humiliating and possibly unconstitutional promises by the United States in exchange for 52 Americans, mainly diplomatic personnel, whom Iran had kidnapped on November 4, 1979 and held in close captivity ever since.

The facts are hardly in dispute. Shortly after the Shah's flight and the Ayatollah's accession to supreme power, a band of so-called "student militants" stormed the American embassy in Teheran, captured all the people therein, and seized and rifled through everything on the premises, including diplomatic correspondence and files. Three other American diplomats were imprisoned in the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Just who the assailants were is less clear. They were "militant" (i.e., violent), all right, but it is questionable whether they were students. They represented themselves as super-Muslims, but it is hard to avoid a suspicion that some of them were disguised Communists. Certainly they never attacked Soviet premises or personnel, though that restraint may have been merely prudential. What is relevant, however, is not the identity of the actors, but their act.

So far, the seizure was only one more instance of terrorism, not essentially different from similar attacks on American embassies in Pakistan and the Sudan; it could not be called a violation of international law. But almost immediately the Ayatollah ratified (though he may not have directly ordered) the actions of those whom he called "our dear young people." Kidnapping diplomats and holding them hostage by authority of the host state's government was something new, never done even by Hitler or Stalin. It is hard to imagine a more flagrant violation of the law of nations.

First, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to which both Iran and the United States are signatory, provides in the most explicit terms that embassy premises and property shall be immune from search; that the embassy's archives, documents, and its official correspondence shall be inviolable; that the receiving state shall insure to all members of a diplomatic mission freedom of movement; and that it shall permit and protect their free communication with their own government. Article 29 is worth quoting:

> The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention. The receiving state . . . shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his person, freedom, or dignity.

Finally, "A diplomatic agent shall enjoy immunity from the criminal jurisdiction of the receiving state." (Spokesmen for the Iranian government were constantly threatening to try the hostages as "spies" and maybe execute some of them, although these threats were probably intended only as bargaining tactics and to inflict mental torture on the captives.) All of the hostages were within the Convention's protection. I have mentioned only the most important violations of the treaty: practically all its other substantive provisions were also breached.

Although it may be redundant, it should also be pointed out that Iran's actions were similarly in flagrant violation of its obligations under the Treaty for the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents, which in essence requires the signatories either themselves to try or to extradite for trial elsewhere terrorists, like the "student militants," who commit such crimes. The only reason that the Iranians did not violate the United Nations' Resolution Against the Taking of Hostages was that that treaty was not opened for signatures until December 4, 1979, at which time the Ayatollah himself would not have had the effrontery, even if he had had the desire, to sign it.

Perhaps even more basic is the fact that, as stated in the preamble to the Vienna Convention, "peoples of all nations from ancient times have recognized the status of diplomatic agents." To be specific, we know that they have done so for at least 2,500 years. Herodotus tells us that when Xerxes, the Persian King of Kings, sent heralds to Athens and Sparta to demand earth and water (as

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symbols of submission) the Spartans threw them down a well, and the Athenians into "the pit of punishment," bidding them take earth and water and carry it to Xerxes. What punishment this brought upon Athens the Father of History did not know, but the god of heralds, who had a temple in Sparta, thereupon subjected Sparta to such a series of alarming omens that the city sent two noble Spartan volunteers to Susa, the Persian capital, to atone with their lives for the slaying of the heralds. But Xerxes sent them home, saying that "he would not act like the Lacedaemonians, who, by killing the heralds, had broken the laws which all men hold in common." The comparison between the Ayatollah and the Achaemenid kings of Persia is not to the former's advantage. (We are also told that the ancient Persians taught their sons to ride, to shoot the bow, and to speak the truth. What the state of horsemanship and archery is in Iran I do not know, but its mullahs obviously do not count veracity among the Islamic virtues. However, in fairness it must be said that the Ayatollah's lies display a gorgeous fantasy, far more entertaining than the drab products of the *Pravda* factory.)

IRAN, therefore, is disgraced by the commission of a monstrous crime against "the laws which all men hold in common." The disgrace of the United States rests on a different base, its acquiescence in that crime. What the President should have done, of course, was to deliver an ultimatum and then, if the hostages were not released by a specified date, resort to force, as the Israelis did at Entebbe and the West Germans at Mogadishu. At the very least, he should have recognized that in certain circumstances the lives of diplomats, like those of soldiers, are at risk; and he should have honored the basic principle that a government should never make any concession to terrorists, whether governmental or private, and should negotiate with them only to persuade them to surrender or to gain time to prepare military measures. Mr. Carter preferred to rely on appeasement. The principal peaceful measures which he and Cyrus Vance, his Secretary of State, took included the following:

1. Iranian assets under American control were frozen. This was an obvious and appropriate sanction, but by itself inadequate. It did not seriously inconvenience the Iranian government for more than a year.

2. Imposition, on April 7, 1980, of a trade embargo on Iran. Some of our allies were persuaded to do likewise, although without much enthusiasm. These restrictions were easily evaded and do not seem to have bothered Iran so long as its supply of hard currency held out. Carter's order not to buy Iranian oil, imposed shortly after the embassy seizure, was nearly meaningless, since Iran's oil production soon fell to a small fraction of what it had been under the Shah, and was still further reduced by the Iraqi attack in September 1980.

3. Also in April, the United States broke diplomatic relations with Iran. Why it took so long to take this obvious step has never been explained. No serious effort was made to deport the pro-Khomeini Iranian students in this country, many of whom were staging noisy and provocative demonstrations. Although large numbers of them had dropped out of school or had overstayed their visas, the American Civil Liberties Union came to their defense so vigorously and interposed so many legal obstructions (ultimately rejected by the courts) that only about 1,000 out of some 50,000 Iranian students were actually deported. (It should be emphasized, however, that many or most of the 50,000 did in fact behave themselves and were not subject to deportation. The vast majority, including Khomeini supporters, seemed to prefer life in the domain of Satan to sanctity in the Imam's theocracy.)

4. The case was brought to the United Nations Security Council, which (for a wonder) called upon Iran to free the hostages. The gesture was, of course, entirely futile; Iran simply ignored the whole proceeding. When a majority of the Council voted to impose sanctions, the Soviet Union interposed its veto. Secretary General Waldheim went to Teheran, where his car was mobbed, he was not allowed to see the hostages, and he was denied admission to the presence of the Ayatollah. Thereafter he formed a commission, which accomplished nothing and quietly faded away.

5. Resort was next had to the World Court, where the Attorney General of the United States, wearing a morning coat, argued the obvious to the judges, who unanimously ordered Iran, which had not bothered to show up in court, to release the hostages. The order was, it goes without saying, ignored—an experience to which the Court has become accustomed.

THE chronicle of silliness, futility, and weakness could be prolonged. Some of Mr. Carter's tactics would be funny, if they were not so sad. Early on, he dispatched Ramsey Clark to Teheran to plead with the Ayatollah. Khomeini (who probably did not realize how much pro-Iranian propaganda Clark could have been counted on to generate) refused to see him, and he got no farther than Turkey. The former Attorney General did not actually reach Teheran until June 1980, when he was the life and soul of a hate-America conference. Similarly, at Christmas 1979, some of the hostages received the ministrations of the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., and a couple of like-minded American clergymen acceptable to the terrorists. The President did his bit by urging Americans to fly flags and send Christmas messages to the captives. He even went to the length of refusing to light the White House Christmas tree.

At the end of April 1980, almost six months after the kidnapping, Carter finally attempted what he should have done at first—a military raid to rescue the hostages. It was, of course, too late

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and too little, ill-planned and worse executed, as we know in the light of hindsight. The circumstances were undoubtedly much more difficult than those which the Israelis faced at Entebbe and the Germans at Mogadishu, for the kidnappers (who, of course, included the government of Iran) were numerous and the hostages were held in the middle of Teheran, far from the sea or any airport. Probably some or all of them would have been killed even if the operation had gone as planned—though some Israeli generals were quoted as saying that they thought it could have been successful.

On the other hand, the military resources of the United States were—or at least should have been —much greater than those of Israel or West Germany. Clearly there were other and perhaps better military options, ranging from the relatively mild one of a naval blockade to the destruction of Iran's air force, navy, and key military installations, with threats of more to come unless the hostages were promptly released.

Although Iran had, of course, committed and was continuing an act of war, and the United States could properly have taken whatever unilateral measures were permitted by the law of war, no such thing was threatened or attempted. Mr. Vance's reaction to the solitary and inadequate effort to use force was in fact to resign in virtuous indignation.

THUS the outrage proceeded to its sorry end. The Iranians, perceiving that the incoming President was likely to be a tougher customer than the outgoing one, decided to bargain seriously with the latter in order to get as much as they could before he left office. Although they did not get the $24 billion which was their original asking price (possibly because it was constitutionally impossible for Carter to pay it), they got quite a lot. Crime paid.

The contention of Messrs. Carter, Mondale, Muskie, and the rest of the surrender team—that Iran was given only what it already owned—cannot survive examination of the agreement with Iran which Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher signed in Algiers on January 19. The agreement is complex, sometimes vague, and the parts relating to American bank loans on which Iran is in default have not (as of this writing) been published. Whether Iran would receive several hundred million dollars worth of military supplies which had been bought and paid for before the revolution was left obscure. The United States had proclaimed its neutrality in the war between Iraq and Iran, and the delivery of a lot of weapons to Iran would have been at least embarrassing. (Shortly after the new administration took office, Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig said unambiguously that no arms would be delivered to Iran.)

Still, it is possible to itemize the major American concessions to terrorism. I shall describe them in simple, but I hope not oversimplified, terms.

CLAIMS OF AMERICANS FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT, EXPROPRIATION OF PROPERTY, ETC. There are more than 300 such American claimants. Many of them have filed suit in American courts and obtained attachments of Iranian property, such as bank deposits, in the United States to insure satisfaction of judgment. The agreement purports to cut off all such litigation and to wipe out the attachments on the property handed over to Iran: "The United States agrees to terminate all legal proceedings in United States courts involving claims of United States persons and institutions against Iran and its state enterprises, to nullify all attachments and judgments obtained therein, to prohibit all further litigation based on such claims, and to bring about the termination of such claims through binding arbitration."

In exchange for their rights under American law, the claimants are relegated to an "International Arbitration Tribunal," composed of members one-third appointed by Iran, one-third by the United States, and one-third selected by mutual agreement of the members so appointed. To insure payment of any awards the Tribunal may make against Iran, that country will pay $1 billion of the funds transferred to it into a "security account" in Algeria, to be used only for that purpose. Whenever the amount in the "security account" drops below $500 million, Iran will put in funds sufficient to bring it up to that figure. What would happen if Iran breached that commitment is unclear.

But the contingency may not arise, for I think it possible that the Tribunal will never function at all. Iran is likely to propose as "impartial" members Libyans or Syrians, for example, to whose appointment the American members could not (I trust) possibly agree. How such a deadlock would be resolved is not apparent in the text of the agreement.

The question of the constitutionality of this abrogation of creditors' legal rights is complicated, there are few legal precedents, and lawyers disagree, but it is at least doubtful that the President has power to take any such action. This issue is pretty certain to be raised in American courts by many of the claimants, who will contend that President Carter's action deprives them of property without just compensation, in violation of the Fifth Amendment, and that the executive has no power to abrogate the courts' jurisdiction. Presumably government lawyers, as distinct from lawyers paid by Iran, will have the unsavory job of trying to defeat the suits brought by American claimants. If the claimants win, American taxpayers will presumably foot the bill, for there will be no way of retrieving the assets handed over to Iran.

The United States also agreed promptly to withdraw all claims pending against Iran before the International Court of Justice. Presumably Iran

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insisted on this merely to give Mr. Carter's nose an additional rub in the dirt, for it would certainly pay no attention to any orders that Court might issue.

BANKS. American banks, including their European branches, controlled something more than $5 billion in Iranian deposits. They were owed $4-5 billion on defaulted loans to Iran. (The defaults were not deliberate, since Iran's assets were frozen.) Under American law the banks could have paid themselves by "setting off" what they owed Iran (i.e., the deposits) against what Iran owed them, and paying Iran only the surplus. Except in certain types of bankruptcy, not relevant here, the banker's right of set-off is virtually foolproof. Yet in this case the banks gave up their right of set-off.

Although I have seen no text of an agreement on the bank loans, the New York *Times* has reported without qualification or citation of sources that about $5 billion of the returned assets will be used to repay American and other Western banks. If this is so, the probable reason for Iran's agreement is simply its need to preserve the possibility of further borrowing. If Iran does not pay, I do not know how the banks can collect. There is a suggestion, adumbrated in the *Times*, that some bank managements went along because they believed that, even if their banks never saw their money again, the President's order to return the frozen deposits would be a defense to stockholder suits against directors. Maybe, maybe not.

ASSETS OF THE SHAH AND HIS FAMILY. The United States agreed to freeze any assets in the United States which are owned by the Shah's estate or his "close relatives," and to enforce the freeze order by civil and criminal proceedings.

Similarly, the United States must order everyone within its jurisdiction to report to the Treasury for transmission to Iran within 30 days everything he knows about any such assets, and must enforce this order too by civil and criminal proceedings. "The United States will make known to all appropriate United States courts that in any litigation [concerning such assets] the claims of Iran should not be considered legally barred either by sovereign immunity principles or by the act of state doctrine and that Iranian decrees and judgments relating to such assets should be enforced by such courts in accordance with United States law. As to any judgment of a United States court which calls for transfer of any property or assets to Iran, the United States hereby guarantees the enforcement of the final judgment to the extent that the property or assets exist within the United States." Another dirty job for government lawyers, and one of very dubious constitutionality.

But Iran may not gain much from these concessions. The Pahlevi family owns, probably through a tangled web of corporations, some valuable real estate and perhaps other assets in the United States. But I think it intrinsically probable that most of their wealth is in Swiss banks and similar safe hiding places whose like does not exist in this country.

CLAIMS OF THE HOSTAGES AND THEIR FAMILIES. "The United States . . . will . . . bar and preclude the prosecution against Iran of any pending or future claims of the United States or United States nationals arising out of events . . . related to (a) the seizure of the 52 United States nationals on Nov. 4, 1979, (b) their subsequent detention, (c) injury to the United States property or property of the United States nationals or their property within the United States Embassy compound in Teheran after Nov. 3, 1979, and (d) injury to the United States nationals or their property as a result of popular movements in the course of the Islamic revolution in Iran which were not an act of the government of Iran. The United States will also bar and preclude the prosecution against Iran in the courts of the United States of any pending or future claims asserted by persons other than the United States nationals [e.g., the hostages' families] arising out of the events specified in the preceding sentence."

Many epithets and expletives, including "unconstitutional," come readily to mind, but this provision can stand without characterization or comment. If the hostages are compensated, as they should be, it will be done by American taxpayers.

THERE are other objectionable concessions, but these are enough to show that the Carter administration surrendered far more than property to which Iran was lawfully entitled and that its assertions to the contrary were simply untrue.

Perhaps the most depressing aspect of the whole miserable business was that the surrender to terrorism was negotiated without audible objection by the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, or any of the other creators of orthodox liberal opinion. They all thought that anything was preferable to force. The *Times, after* the agreement had been signed, found it to be "tolerable," and "neither triumph nor humiliation," but nonetheless came boldly out with a declaration that "No government or terrorist group, whatever its domestic or diplomatic purpose, should be left to think it can profit from seizing and abusing American citizens. The final deal with Teheran, unless fully examined and properly explained, might well create the wrong impression."

Might? It is difficult to see how governments like Libya, Vietnam, or North Korea can fail to draw the conclusion from Carter's capitulation that the way to extract concessions from the United States is to kidnap its diplomats and threaten to shoot them as spies.

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What Happened to the Schools

Joseph Adelson

IT IS only recently, and only by hindsight, that we have been able to appreciate the enormous stresses imposed upon the schools in the immediate postwar era. The most visible of these was demographic in origin. There was an extraordinary increase in the number of youngsters to be educated, requiring a vast expansion of the public schools, and ultimately of the colleges and universities. That expansion was carried out remarkably well, or so it seems to me; there were strains, inevitably, but these were compensated for by a sort of euphoria about doing so much so energetically in so short a period of time—not merely the building of physical plant, but the recruitment and training of a large body of teachers and administrators. It was a euphoria that extended to the idea of education itself. Education came to be seen as a sort of universal solvent for the problems of the polity. The utopian tendencies in the American mind were to some large degree invested in the schools, in the notion of perfectibility through learning. As we shall see, there was to be a great fall, indeed one we are still witnessing; but I think it is fair to say that through most of the 1950's the authority of the schools rested upon a sense of inner confidence—they believed in themselves because we believed in them, and we believed in them because they were the repository of so many of our fondest hopes, for ourselves, for our children, for the nation.

There were other outcomes of the demographic pressure, which we are just now beginning to understand and—ruefully—appreciate. One of these was the effect of generation size—that is, not merely the numbers involved in a generation, but its size relative to the total population. A baby-boom generation is a crowded one; economic and other opportunities are fewer, and more fiercely competed for. In the fullness of time, we see in that generation an increase in social pathology, and more specifically increases in the rate of suicide, homicide, delinquency, illegitimacy, alcoholism, and the like. That at least is the breathtakingly bold theory proposed recently by a number of economists and demographers, most forcefully by Richard Easterlin.* Whether or not the hypothesis is true—and we shall soon know, since it is a hypothesis that tests itself, and predicts that we should soon be seeing declines in these indices—the fact is that beginning in the 1960's the schools found themselves confronting, rather suddenly, new and unexpected problems in discipline, in student motivation, and in collective morale. Perhaps one ought to stress how quickly it took place. As it happens, my three children, born five years apart, went to the same high school. The oldest tells me that he knew no one who used drugs; the second, two years younger, says that drugs were being used, but only by deviant youngsters, the emotionally troubled, and the socially outcast; the third, in school three years later, says that the occasional use of drugs was commonplace and that regular and heavy use was to be found among a substantial minority of his fellow students.

The size of the postwar generation had yet another effect which was not immediately evident. School systems enlarged, accelerating a long-standing tendency toward the consolidation of school districts. The figures are quite astonishing. In 1932 there were around 127,000 school districts in this country; now there are about 16,000.† There were many things at work in producing that attrition—the Conant Report on the high schools, published in 1959, placed a particular emphasis on the educational advantages of consolidation. The outcome was a substantial increase in system size, and with it, inevitably, a shift to bureaucratic modes of organization. That shift in turn brought with it a series of changes in the nature and practice of authority in the schools. The change was from traditional modes of authority—that is, direct and personal—to legal and contractual modes, in which the emphasis is placed upon conformity to rules and legal codes.**

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* *Birth and Fortune* (Basic Books, 1980).

† These figures are taken from Paul Bohannan, writing in *Science*, December 1980, pp. 17-18.

** The same point was made by Gerald Grant in his address to the conference, "Crisis of Authority in the High School" (the proceedings of the conference will be published by the Center in the near future). Also see a penetrating discussion by N. P. Emler and R. Hogan, "Developing Attitudes Toward Law and Justice: An Integrative Review," in Brehm and Gibbons (eds.), *Developmental Social Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 1981).

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The distinction between traditional and legalistic modes of authority is far from a new idea—in fact, it is a central concept in the writings of the pioneers of contemporary sociology, especially Max Weber. But the trend toward legalistic modes of authority, though discernible since at least the 19th century, was relatively slow in coming to the schools. When it did come, it could not have arrived at a less propitious time, at least so far as discipline was concerned. Just at the moment when social pathology was beginning its ominous rise, educators began to find themselves being buried in paper, and what was worse, constrained in the performance of disciplinary authority by increasingly complex regulations involving the rights of students, these in turn following upon court decisions which produced a widespread anxiety about litigation.

I remember quite vividly a sort of watershed event in my own experience of the schools, as a parent. This took place a little more than ten years ago. I attended what was advertised as an urgent meeting of the PTO at the junior high school my son attended. Arriving there, I learned that the meeting had been called to discuss some disturbing incidents taking place near the school; some of the older, roughneck children were bullying and extorting money from some of the younger children on the way to and from school. There had been many complaints from parents to the principal, but the answers had not been satisfactory. So the PTO had decided to make the issue public. A youngish assistant principal had been sent to calm the multitudes, and I have rarely seen anyone quite so unhappy—he stammered, he mumbled, he hemmed and hawed, he shifted from foot to foot, and his message to us was that they would do their best, but that probably not much could be done.

It was a long and rancorous meeting. The assistant principal, though defensive and embarrassed, provided us with a resumé of the legal education he had himself been receiving, at the hands of the police and of the school's attorney. That course of instruction told him not what he could do, but all the many thing he could not do. The audience listened, incredulous, then angry and disgusted. At one point one parent shouted something to the effect that this would not have happened in the old days, and brought forth the name of a revered principal of the recent past, who had exercised a benign form of curbside justice. But those days were gone forever.

I do not want to sentimentalize the good old days, nor do I want to focus exclusively upon problems of discipline, important as they are—it is the leading complaint parents bring against the public schools. Yet we see in this example how forces and ideologies both extrinsic and alien to the schools and to education—in this case, the courts and the adversarial spirit—have begun to penetrate the practice of education in America, not only with regard to discipline, but in other realms of educational policy as well.

Perhaps the most important source of the school's diminished authority is the growth—I am tempted to say the cancerous growth—of judicial and bureaucratic intervention, generally at the federal level. The initial occasion was desegregation and racial equity in education; somewhat later, questions of sexual equality were addressed. Yet one now senses that these issues were used merely as pretexts, that a sort of iron law of federal expansiveness had come into play, which at this moment shows few signs of recession. It is an extremely troubling development, since neither the courts—given their adversarial style—nor the bureaucracies—given their tendency toward Byzantine inefficiency—are the appropriate forum for the discussion or the making of educational decisions.

Let me illustrate by an example close to home—and I mean that literally, since the case I have in mind took place in my own home town, Ann Arbor, and in fact in my own home neighborhood. I refer to the black English litigation. The case began when a group of radical activists, largely white, sued the school system on behalf of a group of black families. It was their claim that the poor academic progress of the children was due to the fact that their native language, so to speak, is black English, while instruction takes place in standard English, a language these children do not fully comprehend. As a solution, the teachers were to be trained to understand black English, and to respect its linguistic autonomy.

To anyone on the scene, the doctrine being proposed was not far from frivolous. Some of the children in question are from poor families. In at least some cases, family life is unstable and demoralized. School attendance is irregular, among other reasons because the families move so often (I am told, for example, that about half of the plaintiff families have already left the district). Given these circumstances, it is hard to imagine how language can be singled out as the prime reason for poor achievement. Nor is there any reason to believe that these youngsters do in fact speak black English exclusively, or cannot understand standard English. They watch television daily, they talk easily with white classmates; all those with direct and extensive experience with these youngsters report that black English is a variant dialect that can be turned on and off depending on circumstances, in much the same way that many middle-class Southern children learn to speak both standard English and "country," and switch back and forth between the two depending on whom they are addressing.

Hence, there was no reason to believe that black English functioned as a foreign language, or that it acted as an impediment to learning. Nevertheless, a federal judge decided to hear the case, much

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to everyone's surprise; and much to everyone's astonishment he agreed with expert testimony that black English was linguistically a distinctive language, and hence a probable factor in the poor school performance of these youngsters. The remedy ordered was that the teachers be compelled to attend a series of lectures wherein they would be instructed on the linguistic merits and integrity of black English. That remedy has now been tested, and the results are precisely what our common sense would lead us to expect: it has not made the slightest difference in the achievement of the children. In short, the nullity of the outcome follows directly from the silliness of the suit, the foolishness of the judicial holding, and the fatuity of the remedy.*

What should trouble us most about this case is the ease with which a judge has intruded himself into the heart of the educator's domain, into what is to be taught, how it is to be taught, and how teachers are to be trained to teach it. What qualifies the judge to do so? What qualifies him to pronounce on the linguistics of English dialects? What qualifies him to pronounce on the causes of scholastic achievement, and the means needed to enhance it? The answer is—nothing at all; yet the judiciary now takes it upon itself—here as elsewhere—to settle the most recondite technical and scientific questions. What began as judicial activism in the cause of equality has by some demonic inner logic become a kind of judicial narcissism, wherein the competence of the mediating institutions of American life is systematically diminished by judicial vanity. Here is Martin Shapiro, a distinguished student of the law, now at Berkeley, on this matter:

> Our newspapers tell us of judges who forbid the transfer of Air Force squadrons from one base to another, delay multi-million dollar construction projects, intervene in complex negotiations between public employers and their employees, oversee the operation of railroads, and decide the location of schools. In the course of these litigations we have seen judges blithely intervening in precisely the kinds of massive and complex technical matters about which they would have automatically disclaimed competence twenty years ago. Judges now joyously try their hands at everything from the engineering of atomic reactors to the validation of IQ tests. They run school districts, do regional land use, redesign welfare programs, and calculate energy needs. They make policy decisions with massive financial and political consequences for every level of government. They destroy and redirect the building of educational, electoral, tax, and public-utility systems that are the products of thousands of hours of legislative negotiation and hundreds of complex statutes. Today there seems to be no public policy issue, no matter how massive, complex, or technical, that some judge somewhere has not felt fully capable of deciding aided only by the standard processes of litigation.†

Shapiro goes on to write that one defense of this process is that the judge is in a position to decide among the rival technical experts of the two parties, and thus free of the domination that technicians exercise over laymen, who generally see only one side of the issue. Shapiro says that although that may be true in theory, "in reality the judge often cannot understand the technical testimony on either side, has no mode of independently evaluating the accuracy of either, and is reduced to an act of faith in one side's technicians or the other's. The judicial weighing of technical testimony often comes down to a law clerk, fresh out of law school with no technical background, juggling footnotes to support whatever guess the judge is making."

Nor is the judiciary alone in its zeal to administer the schools. Congress has done more than its share, in a series of ill-advised acts of legislation, as has the executive through the bureaucracies. In short, all three branches of government, and furthermore, separate or overlapping or competing units within these branches, take it as their privilege to intervene in education. They do so with almost no regard to the financial costs involved. And once they have done so, their decisions, however erroneous or short-sighted these turn out to be in practice, prove nearly impossible to modify or rescind. The fruits of judicial and bureaucratic intervention are painfully evident to those of us in the university: a professor in Georgia jailed for three months in a tenure dispute; or a federal functionary blithely sitting in on university classes to monitor potential bias; or the extraordinary and thus far unchecked growth of a bureaucracy both within and without the universities determined to compose racial and sexual quotas, to rectify an unproved and unlikely pattern of discrimination.

Thus the authority of education—at all levels—is weaker today, far weaker, than at any other moment in memory. The schools do not fully govern themselves; they do not freely choose their own goals; they are not guided by their own values. Above all, they cannot bring themselves to resist these false or meretricious or merely foolish ideas imposed on them by others. Here I come to the point I want to stress, that our inability to resist those ideas stems in part from our inability to develop or sustain a coherent idea of ourselves, and of our own essential values.

In its relation to the federal courts and to the bureaucracies, the schools have had to confront

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* This may seem harsh, but on the contrary, my brief account does not capture the full bizarreness of this case or the strange character of its judicial reasoning. For an excellent summary and analysis, see Nathan Glazer's "Black English and Reluctant Judges" in *Public Interest*, Winter 1981, pp. 40-54.

† "Judicial Activism," in S. M. Lipset (ed.), *The Third Century* (Hoover Institution Press, 1979), p. 125.

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institutions which, like Isaiah Berlin's famous hedgehog, know but a single thing, that thing being a distended and distorted idea of equality, distended in that it puts equality above all other values, and distorted because it has transformed the original idea, of moral equality, the idea of Jefferson and Lincoln, to the idea of numerical equality, that all groups must be represented equally in all statuses.* A corollary idea is the notion that variations in achievement are due only to error or malevolence, which in practice amounts to a charge either of negligence or willed malice in the schools. In their defense of their single idea, the courts and bureaucracies behave not like the ordinary hedgehog, but like a fierce and demented one, which knocks down anything that gets in its way—in short, a hedgehog with the ambitions of a fox. Whether the schools could in fact educate the courts on their narrow idea of equality is unclear—that idea has the fatal attraction of a vulgar belief understood to be advanced. Yet one can say with some confidence that they will be unable to do so until they are ready to plead publicly the traditionalist values they hold privately.

For more than any other institution in American society, the schools have become an arena for the struggle between the values of traditionalism and of modernity. Among the values of traditionalism are: merit, accomplishment, competition, and success; self-restraint, self-discipline, and the postponement of gratification; the stability of the family; and a belief in certain moral universals. The modernist ethos scorns the pursuit of success; is egalitarian and redistributionist in emphasis; tolerates or encourages sensual gratification; values self-expression as against self-restraint; accepts alternative or deviant forms of the family; and emphasizes ethical relativism.

I think we do well here to distinguish between the universities and the schools, the former having been simultaneously the seedbed, staging area, and ultimate haven of the modernist temper. Not entirely, of course, since important segments of the university—I have in mind the sciences and some of the professional schools—have been largely immune to the modernist spirit, especially so with respect to the values of merit and success. On the whole, however, the intellectual debacle of the universities, which began in the 1960's and continues to this day—a debacle the symptoms of which were and are grade inflation and various curricular travesties—was the inevitable result of a tacit submission to modernist ideology. I want to quote a marvelous pair of sentences from Lionel Trilling, who wrote that "ideology is not acquired by thought but by breathing the haunted air. The life in ideology, from which none of us can wholly escape, is a strange submerged life of habit and semi-habit in which to ideas we attach strong passions but no very clear awareness of the concrete reality of their consequences." Breathing that haunted air, the haunted air of modernism, meant that we no longer remembered what we believed in, or why. I recall my first recognition of this, in the late 1960's, when our faculty faced a student demand for a new bachelor's degree, the major reason being the desire of some students to escape the requirement for a modest degree of proficiency in a foreign language. Heart-rending stories were told of students possessing the highest degree of sensitivity and moral conscience, yet failing the French examination for the third time, and thereupon cast out into the darkness. What struck me most was the apparent inability of our faculty, collectively, to frame a cogent response, to argue the case for language. And listening to that debate, or rather that non-debate, I felt I was gazing into the void. For if one could not answer the question, why language, one could not, if pressed, answer the questions: why mathematics, why science, why literature, why history, why anything else?

The situation in the schools—I mean here secondary education in particular—was, and is, far different, more complex, sadder. In their fall from public favor, the universities got their just deserts, in choosing to live that "strange and submerged life of habit and semi-habit" in which passionate ideas are taken to be without consequence. But the American public schools rarely generate values; they more often merely absorb and reflect them. As John Dewey once told us, the educator is uniquely sensitive to what he takes to be the needs of his constituents. He accommodates; he serves; he aims to please. He is the least arrogant, the least petulant, the least willful of all professionals; and sad to say, the most lacking in self-esteem. In a morally unified and harmonious era, the schools can serve the public intention readily. In an era marked by a multiplicity of aims, or by competing aims, the schools tend to become ambivalent, or confused, or inhibited—often all three at once.

In the postwar period, the schools were to do everything at once. They were to help us beat the Russians into space; they were then to liberate poor and minority youngsters from the heritage of slavery and oppression; they were shortly thereafter to help middle-class children free themselves from their bourgeois constraints; and then someone noticed that the SAT scores had plummeted, and so they were to fix that too. It was never quite clear how these separate aims were to be achieved simultaneously, although it was commonly believed that it might be done through some revolution in method or technology. As I have written elsewhere: "The story of education in this period is a story of experiments—an abundance, a cornucopia of reforms and breakthroughs, each introduced breathlessly, each kept afloat by publicity,

* I have borrowed here from the important book by Terry Eastland and William J. Bennett, *Counting by Race* (Basic Books, 1979).

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and each sinking out of sight, soon to be replaced by more publicity, and more disappointment—The New Math. Head Start. Computer instruction. Programmed learning. Closed-circuit TV. Community control. Contract teaching. Open classrooms. Sensitivity training."*

IT IS now fairly clear that the schools took on too much, and by doing so without sufficient caution or demurral, they were implicitly promising more than they could fulfill. Furthermore, what the schools had accepted for their agenda was not necessarily responsive to the interests and values of the ordinary families they were serving. It has been an abiding strength of American education—and a source of its weakness as well—that it remains close to the needs of that essential constituency. But as the postwar era wore on, the schools found themselves trying to serve not only local interests, but also the larger goals of public policy. In addition, the schools were being persuaded by our governing elites—the universities, the foundations, and the mass media—to accept the claims of the modernist spirit. In pressing these claims upon the schools—as always, in the name of progress—these elites were in fact helping to separate school from family. It is quite clear what the ordinary citizen wants from public education—one can discover this in casual conversation, even in a relentlessly progressive community like my own, or by examining, as I have recently done, the evidence on parental opinion about the schools. He wants there to be more discipline, both in personal conduct and in maintaining academic standards.† He wants there to be a greater emphasis on moral education, on teaching children about right and wrong. In short, the demands of the American family upon the schools reflect the spirit of traditionalism—children are to be literate, ambitious, well-behaved, and morally virtuous.

I would not want to say that the schools took the side of modernity. As is their wont, they tried to do both things at once, that is to retain the loyalty of the bourgeois family, and yet offer the impression—to themselves and to others—of being with it, contemporary, alert, and alive to the new values of the putative future. It has not quite worked, not really. If you are going to hold children to high standards of achievement, you cannot at the same time, secretly, feel that ambition is a crass or ignoble motive. If you are going to teach children to be virtuous—that is, to be brave and loyal and honest—you must yourself possess a strong sense of what is right and wrong, and you cannot in one silent part of your mind feel that there are no moral absolutes, that virtue and vice are meaningless since they are understood differently among the Kwakiutl. The compromises attempted were never quite satisfactory. Thus, if you cannot bring yourself to teach values, thinking that to be old-fashioned, or absolutistic, or authoritarian, you can instead teach values clarification, wherein the parental wish for instruction in ethics is met by engaging the child in a pseudo-Socratic dialogue, ethically neutral in appearance. Yet some parents have come to feel—and I think correctly—that the very mode in which the questions are framed is a way of introducing, surreptitiously, the agenda of modernist ethics. That same uneasiness is to be found in other areas. With respect to sex education one often feels that there is considerable deception or self-deception at work, that the bland and ingenuous intentions of instruction—to reduce illegitimate pregnancies and venereal disease, etc. —are little more than a means of introducing the panoply of modernist views of sexuality—one which tolerates sexual experimentation, glamorizes homosexuality, and so on. In the long run, these efforts at compromise further diminish the authority of the schools, in that they diminish our sense of their probity—we come to feel either that they do not know what they are doing, or that they are trying to put something over on us.

In either case, the parent is further alienated from the school. That the assault on traditional education was a struggle about values did not escape the attention of the ordinary citizen, who quickly came to believe that his children's schools were becoming trendy in curriculum, gimmicky in methods, lax about standards, and confused about purposes. He came to feel that the schools were abandoning his interests, were devoted to ideals he found alien, and were doing a poor job of teaching besides. Accordingly, he began to withdraw both emotional and financial support from the schools. That cooling of interest, that readiness to look elsewhere, is one of the most striking changes in the American attitude toward the public schools. Twenty years ago there were few families with children to educate who would have considered anything but the public schools, for to do otherwise, or even to ponder it seriously, seemed to suggest a rejection of the democratic spirit, a rejection of a tacit social contract. That is not the case today. Most parents, of course, do choose public education, but the choice is not reflexive; one sees little of that profound allegiance to the idea of public schooling that marked an earlier generation.

WHAT role has the family itself played in the current crisis of the schools? One cannot deny that the family is not what it used to be, that it has come under severe pressure, that it has lost at least some of its self-confidence and thus its sense of authority, especially in relation to the adolescent young. The most palpable

* "Battered Pillars of the American System: Education," *Fortune*, April 1975, p. 143.

† For a trenchant analysis of how modernist assumptions about the nature of achievement have damaged the competence of the schools, see T. Tomlinson, "The Troubled Years: An Interpretive Analysis of Public Schooling Since 1950," *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1981, pp. 373-376.

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evidence we have are the statistics on social pathology among adolescents I alluded to earlier. Edward Wynne has taken the lead in assembling this evidence and making it more widely known: the homicide rate for white males ages fifteen to nineteen has more than doubled in a fifteen-year period, as has the suicide rate, as has the rate of illegitimacy for young white females, as have reported cases of gonorrhea. It is likely that much of this is associated with the decline in family stability, with increases in the divorce rate and the number and percentage of single-parent households. Interestingly enough, American parents, when surveyed about the lack of discipline which so troubles them, are quite ready to point their finger not only at the schools, but also at the failure of some families to raise their children properly.

Nevertheless. . . . What is true of some families is not true of all, and indeed may not be true of most. To an extraordinary degree, the American citizen remains attached to the family, both as an idea and as an emotional reality. I have yet to see an opinion survey which does not report a secure and happy family life as the central value in most people's lives. Nor ought we to believe, despite the lugubrious statistics just cited, that American adolescence as a whole has become a disaster area. We now have a series of studies on the adolescent self-image, collected over a period of years, by the eminent psychiatrist Daniel Offer and his colleagues.* These important findings tell us two things—first, that there has indeed been some loss of morale, that the American adolescents studied in the 1970's are less self-confident, less self-controlled, less trusting of others than an equivalent group studied in the 1960's. Yet that erosion is on the whole modest; and after a painstaking examination of the evidence, the authors conclude that the degree of pathology, alienation, and rebelliousness in the American adolescent population need not alarm us, that on the whole these studies confirm what each and every empirical research ever done has also shown, that the vast majority of teenage youngsters are competent, purposeful, at ease with themselves, and closely bonded to their families and their values.

Given the prevailing mood of social commentary on the young, on the family, on the common culture of this country, this appraisal may strike the reader as complacent to the point of eccentricity. So be it. But we must bear in mind that there are economic and class interests at stake, that to portray the American family as feeble and failing is to make a case for a further expansion of the bureaucracies, in the name of helping those who cannot help themselves. That was the hidden message of that recent fiasco, the White House Conference on the Family, of the Carnegie Commission Report on Children, and of almost all other official efforts to instruct us on the imminent collapse of the family. I have tried to suggest that the school's authority has been needlessly enfeebled by the ministering angels of the state. The family has so far resisted that benevolence, to its credit, and to the advantage of us all.

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* D. Offer, E. Ostrow, and K. Howard, *Adolescence: A Psychological Self-Portrait* (Basic Books, in press).

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Anti-Semitism and American History

Jonathan D. Sarna

THE portrait of early America in many American Jewish history textbooks is an alluring one. No anti-Semitism mars the Eden-like national landscape; religious freedom spreads over the face of the country, expanding with the frontier; Jews luxuriate in the blessings of justice and liberty. To be sure, there is the occasional incident to tarnish this glowing picture: Peter Stuyvesant's effort to keep Jews out of New Amsterdam, the recall of Consul Mordecai Noah from Tunis on account of his religion, or General Grant's Order #11 ousting Jews from his war zone in 1862. In every case, however, the severity of the decree is somehow mitigated, and Jews ultimately emerge triumphant.

"One of the most heartwarming phenomena of American life," wrote Jacob Weinstein in 1942, "was the sudden sterilization of the virus of religious bigotry once it was transferred to American soil." Oscar Handlin agreed; early Americans, he averred, generally found Jews "wonderful in their past achievements . . . still more wonderful in their preservation." Seeming exceptions "were not incompatible with the total acceptance of Jews as Americans." The latest survey of American anti-Semitism, by Nathan C. Belth, *A Promise to Keep*,* while less effusive, comes to roughly the same conclusion: the history of American anti-Semitism basically begins in 1877, when the banker Joseph Seligman was excluded from the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga Springs on account of his religion. Before then, Jews were too small a minority to be noticed.

This cheery portrayal of early American Jewish history has a long history itself. Isaac Markens's *The Hebrews in America*, published in 1888, aimed specifically "to show the degree of prominence and influence attained by the Hebrews of the United States." Obstacles on the road to success were ignored by Markens, as were those "Hebrews" who did not succeed. Similarly, the founders of the American Jewish Historical Society hoped originally to demonstrate that Jews acted as "co-workers in the discovery, settlement, and development of our land." Their early studies exuded filiopietism; contrary evidence went unrecognized.

American Jewish historians had no desire to uncover early anti-Semitism; they sought only to counter that which existed in their own time by showing that hatred of Jews was unpatriotic, a deviation from the country's noble past. Articles pictured the idols of the Republic, Washington and Jefferson in particular, as magniloquent philo-Semites. Cotton Mather drew praise for being "modern and liberal in his condemnation of religious persecutions." The Puritans became benevolent Hebraists. Several of Columbus's crewmen, if not the great discoverer himself, were shown to be converted Jews—a conclusion that Oscar Straus excitedly called "an answer for all time to come to any anti-Semitic tendencies in this country." Jewish historians condemned the anti-Semitism of their own day as a bad habit, imported from Europe. If Americans would only return to the virtuous ways of their forebears, they implied, hatred would end.

Studies appearing after World War II, if less tendentious, adhered to the same general outline. Carey McWilliams's *A Mask for Privilege* offered a "progressive" interpretation of American anti-Semitism, blaming it on "the revolution that assured the triumph of business enterprise." The triumph was supposedly confirmed in 1877 and Judeophobia began at once; before then, McWilliams claimed, "the record . . . had been largely free of overt or significant manifestations of anti-Semitism." Oscar Handlin, who viewed American Jewish history as an "adventure in freedom," shifted the onset of significant anti-Semitism from the third quarter of the 19th century to the 20th century; earlier slurs, he claimed, had been without serious malicious intent. Other scholars heatedly debated the issue of how late-19th-century Populists viewed the Jews, a debate as narrow as it was vacuous. John Higham tried to broaden the discussion to cover anti-Semitism in the Gilded Age as a whole, but nobody took up his challenge. What came forth instead was a con-

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* New York Times Books (1979), 305 pp., $11.95.

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sensus view, quite consistent with the then regnant liberal tradition in American history, depicting anti-Semitism as a late and alien phenomenon, largely attributable to outgroups, marginal groups, or groups whose status in society had declined: rural farmers, disaffected workers, and nativist patricians.

CAME the 1960's and 70's, and theories of American exceptionalism fell into disrepute. Studies of the American character grew dusty on the shelves as newer volumes trumpeted diversity and rediscovered the nation's darker sides. Women and minority groups, blacks in particular, joined with a new generation of radical historians to point bitter fingers of accusation at the most highly glorified heroes of the American pantheon. Comparative investigations discovered that America was less exceptional than had once been imagined. Against this background, the study of American anti-Semitism also underwent a change of emphasis. Quietly at first, then with greater vehemence, historians hacked away at the old consensus, showing that its portrayal of events was more wish than reality. While the term anti-Semitism may indeed date to the late 19th century, the actual phenomenon is now known to hark back as far as American Jewry itself.

Jacob R. Marcus's *The Colonial American Jew*, a definitive three-volume study published in 1970, devotes a full chapter to "rejection" of Jews in pre-revolutionary times, discussing literary images, social prejudice, and full-scale incidents of anti-Jewish violence. In the colonial era, "'Jew' was still a dirty word," Marcus writes, "and it was hardly rare to see the Jews denigrated as such in the press." As early as the mid-17th century a New Amsterdam Jew named David Ferera, found guilty of insulting a bailiff, received an inordinately strict punishment on account of his religion. During the period of English rule, New York Jews suffered a violent mob attack against one of their funeral corteges and quite a few desecrations of their cemeteries, besides more regular cases of discrimination and defamation. After weighing the evidence, Marcus still insists that "the Jews here found more acceptance than in any other land in the world," but unlike earlier researchers he never confuses more acceptance with total acceptance.

After independence, the Jewish situation changed only slightly. Although non-Protestants received political rights, the baiting of Jews became an accepted part of political mud-slinging, even when—as in the case of John Israel of Pittsburgh—the candidate in question may not have been Jewish at all. Various recent monographs demonstrate that the range of anti-Semitic incidents in the young republic spanned the spectrum from literary and cultural stereotyping, social and economic discrimination, attacks on Jewish property, all the way to blood libels and lurid descriptions of purported anti-Christian sentiments in classical Jewish texts. In 1820, New York's *German Correspondent* admitted that:

> The Jews are not generally regarded with a favorable eye; and "Jew" is an epithet which is frequently uttered in a tone bordering on contempt. Say what you will, prejudices against the Jews exist here, and subject them to inconveniences from which other citizens of the United States are exempt.

James Gordon Bennett's widely read *New York Herald* displayed particular vehemence in its denunciation of Jews. Though Bennett enjoyed lambasting a host of targets, and was quite capable of printing philo-Semitic articles, his most inflammatory rhetoric evoked the darkest days of medieval disputations:

> Here are pictured forth, from their own sacred writings, the Talmud, which is considered a second part of the Bible, the real opinion of the Jews on the original and Sacred Founder of Christianity. . . . In the midst of Christians, surrounded by Christian usages, the Jews may conceal these terrible opinions and doctrines—may attempt to beguile and deceive those among whom they live, in order the better to crush all religion under the secret poison of infidelity and atheism, but their Talmuds and Targums are evidences against them (November 18, 1837).

SIMILARLY medieval were characterizations of Jews in early American literature. Louis Harap, in his comprehensive book, *The Image of the Jew in American Literature* (1974), finds "invidious stereotypes of the pawnbroker and businessman," along with such timeless motifs as the "Jew's daughter," the Jewish hunchback, and the Jewish criminal in popular ante-bellum fiction. George Lippard's best-selling *The Quaker City or The Monks of Monk Hall* (1844) portrayed a hump-backed Jewish forger, Gabriel Van Gelt, who swindles, blackmails, and commits murder for the sake of money. Joseph Holt Ingraham's tales, best-sellers too, offered a whole cast of dark-eyed Shylocks, beautiful Jewish daughters, and revolting Jewish criminals. To be sure, Jews rarely appear as lone villains in early American literature. Not only do they have Gentile accomplices, but in many cases they exhibit a wise understanding of Jewish-Gentile relations ("Te Christian plead humbly to te Jew ven he would have money, and curses him ven he no more needs him"), and of history ("Under the despotic governments of the old world [the Jew's] political and personal rights have been the football of tyranny and cupidity"). Harap's summary seems apt:

> Novels reveal attitudes and not necessarily behavior . . . probably actual relations were less acerbic than those reflected in [literature]. How-

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ever, the reality must have been ambivalent at best.

Ambivalence is the appropriate word. Conflicting emotions, changing experiences, and divergent influences pulled people now one way, now the other. At times, the lure of the exotic opened doors to Jews. Rural Americans traveled miles just to catch a glimpse of one of God's chosen people. Joseph Jonas of Cincinnati, for example, recalled:

> Many persons of the Nazarene faith residing from 50 to 100 miles from the city, hearing there were Jews living in Cincinnati, came into town for the special purpose of viewing and conversing with some of "the children of Israel, the holy people of God," as they termed us.

As was true in the case of Asian immigrants, however, the lure of the exotic frequently gave way to fear of the unknown. Outsiders came to view Jews as an alien force, a people apart, "deficient," as Charles King (at one time the president of Columbia College) wrote in 1823, "in that single national attachment which binds the man to the soil of his nativity, and makes him the exclusive patriot of his own country." As patronizing curiosity gave way to xenophobic delusion, doors closed, and Jews were kept out.

A second, even more powerful source of ambivalence was the pervasive tension between the "mythological Jew," that cursed figure of Christian tradition, and the "Jew next door" who seemingly gave the lie to every element of the stereotype. Usually it was the mythological Jew—the unscrupulous moneylender, the eternal wanderer, the satanic Christ-killer—who was flayed by anti-Semites. If they sometimes realized that Jews of their acquaintance did not fit the mold, the mold was often too deeply ingrained to change; it was easier to live with the contradiction. "Them Jews —. . . I don't mean you," is a phrase one upstate New Yorker still remembers having heard from her neighbors. Thomas Jefferson, in spite of having several Jewish acquaintances, continued to think Jews morally depraved, and lamented that "among them ethics are so little understood." Henry Ford actually believed that all the "good Jews" of the country, including his friend Rabbi Leo Franklin, would rally to his crusade against the "international Jew."

"When a delusion cannot be dissipated by the facts of reality, it probably does not spring from reality," Freud wrote. Dissonance between received wisdom and perceived wisdom was particularly strong in the case of Jews. From colonial days onward, Jews and Christians cooperated with one another, maintaining close social and economic relations. Intermarriage rates, a reliable if unwelcome sign of religious harmony, periodically rose to high levels. And individual Jews thrived, often rising to positions of wealth and power. Yet popular prejudice based on received wisdom continued nonetheless. Even some slight manifestation of a "typical Jewish trait" brought all the old charges back to the fore.

AMBIVALENCE is a theme that emerges clearly from more recent studies of American anti-Semitism. Bertram Korn, whose pathbreaking book, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, anticipated the contemporary rediscovery of anti-Semitism in the period before the Gilded Age, found that "anti-Jewish prejudice was actually a characteristic expression of the [Civil War] age, part and parcel of the economic and social upheaval effectuated by the war." Korn adduced evidence of anti-Jewish writings and activities both in the North and the South; "the Jews . . . were a popular scapegoat in all areas." Far from being an isolated exception, General Grant's expulsion order was part of a larger pattern. Yet at the same time Jews rose in the ranks of both armies; rabbis won the right to serve as chaplains; Judah Benjamin became a key Confederate leader; and President Lincoln showed unprecedented concern for Jews' civil liberties. In the Civil War as before, Jews in general suffered because of what the word "Jew" symbolized, while individual Jews won the respect of their fellow citizens and emerged from the fratricidal struggle more self-assured than they had ever been before.

In the post-Civil War era, during Reconstruction and in the Gilded Age, many "Israelites"—as some called themselves to distinguish real Jews from mythical ones—prospered with the American business boom. Gaudy showpiece temples, the Jewish form of conspicuous consumption, testified to the community's new status and wealth. Jews entered the upper class. As Naomi W. Cohen, Stephen Birmingham, and John Higham have shown, however, the upper class had at best mixed feelings about whether to welcome Jewish parvenus. In the words of the Boston *Saturday Evening Gazette*, "It is strange that a nation that boasts so many good traits should be so obnoxious." Ultimately, some individual Jews won acceptance, while Jews as a group continued to meet with considerable hostility. Long before Joseph Seligman made his trip to Saratoga and was turned away, complaints about discrimination and prejudice filled the pages of Jewish newspapers.

The range of post-Civil War attitudes toward Jews is perhaps displayed most clearly in American literature and popular culture. Michael Dobkowski's recent book, *The Tarnished Dream: The Basis of American Anti-Semitism*,* emphasizes—to my mind, overemphasizes—the negative stereotypes found in this literature. Based on exhaustive research, the book offers a rogue's gallery of references to Jewish Christ-killers, criminals, Shylocks, conspirators, radicals, and unassimilable barbari-

* Greenwood Press (1979), 291 pp., $22.50.

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ans. Inevitably, there is a juicy quotation from that professional turn-of-the-century anti-Semite, Telemachus Timayenis:

> [The Jew] comes from an inferior race, degraded by corrupt blood, his heart full of malice, his brain full of intrigues and tricks, his ideas invariably turn by natural law to deceit, usury, theft, counterfeiting, forgery, embezzling, extortion, blackmailing, and above all to fraudulent bankruptcy. This is the field and compass of Jewish inventiveness, skill, and genius.

What Dobkowski fails to mention is that Timayenis's views met with "almost universal indignation," according to the *Evening World* of Boston, and at least one of his scurrilous tracts was banned from that city's railway newsstands.

Dobkowski's portrayal of Ignatius Donnelly's anti-Semitism is similarly one-sided and oversimplified. The same Donnelly who complained that "The aristocracy of the world is now almost altogether of Hebrew origin . . . as merciless to the Christians as the Christians had been to them," elsewhere wrote of "poor afflicted Hebrews," and insisted that "we must not blame the Jews. Persecution forced them into their present channels." In a praiseworthy effort to correct earlier myths, Dobkowski has exaggerated the negative literary image of the Jew. Though admittedly weaker in the period of heavy Eastern European Jewish immigration than at any previous time, a more positive, even romanticized image did nevertheless continue to exist. In Henry Harland's *Mrs. Peixado* (1886), for example, Jews are considered by one major character to be "the kindest-hearted and clearest-minded people one meets hereabouts . . . a noble and beautiful people with a record that we Gentiles might well envy."

By all accounts, anti-Semitism crested in America during the half-century preceding World War II. During this era of nativism and then isolationism, Jews faced physical attacks, many forms of discrimination, and intense vilification in print, on the airwaves, in movies, and on stage. The literature dealing with this period is vast; only recently, however, has the element of anti-Semitism been placed under the historian's microscope. Studies have appeared of the nativist mind, the Leo Frank case, Henry Ford's *The International Jew*, the college quota system, urban violence, and the German-American Bund, and more monographs are in progress. Many questions yet remain to be answered, chief among them being how Jews circumvented the obstacles in their path and rose to prominence. Still, a synoptic treatment of recent American anti-Semitism would be timely. Sad to say, Nathan C. Belth's *A Promise to Keep* does not fill the bill.

Belth calls his volume a "narrative of the American encounter with anti-Semitism," though actually all but twenty pages of the book deal with the last hundred years. Before then, he claims (as I mentioned earlier) that anti-Semitism lay in "a recessive phase," hostility being directed at other groups. Defining anti-Semitism narrowly, he concentrates on heavily publicized national incidents, ignoring serious local flare-ups which often had much greater impact on individual Jews. His concern is with "narrative"; he generally eschews interpretation. Occasionally he does discuss the effect of racism, nativism, and economic developments on the formation of anti-Jewish attitudes, but for the most part he falls back on the villain theory of history: his anti-Semites are anti-Semitic because they are wicked. In addition, Belth seems to have overlooked at least a decade of recent scholarship; he writes about Leo Frank without benefit of Leonard Dinnerstein's work, about Henry Ford without consulting David Lewis's biography, about college quotas without referring to volumes by Harold Wechsler and Marcia Synnott, about the Bund without mentioning Sander Diamond's *The Nazi Movement in the United States*. Though the building blocks exist for a thorough, imaginative study of American anti-Semitism, viewing the phenomenon across time and placing it within a proper comparative context, that study still remains to be written.

Unfortunately, the most recent historical works on American anti-Semitism proceed in a different direction altogether.* Influenced by the current obsession with the Holocaust, they ask only one question: could it happen here? And to this question they have only one answer: yes. Michael Selzer adumbrated the current trend in *"Kike": A Documentary History of Anti-Semitism in America* (1972). The volume forms part of the ill-fated *Ethnic Prejudice in America* series, perhaps best remembered for its use of ethnic slurs as titles and ethnic caricatures as jacket photographs. Like the other volumes in this series, Selzer's contains valuable source materials, many of them not otherwise reprinted. Instead of analyzing these sources, however, Selzer exploits them for their shock value:

> There is no reason to believe that from the vast reservoir of bigotry, and specifically of anti-Semitism that exists in this country, a new wave of Jew-baiting, perhaps even of persecution and murder may not arise.

Saul Friedman's *The Incident at Massena*

* I exclude from the present account those many studies of anti-Semitism that have been carried out by sociologists and survey analysts rather than historians. Perhaps the best known of these is the seven-volume series, *Patterns of American Prejudice*, sponsored since 1960 by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. An eighth, summary volume by Harold E. Quinley and Charles Y. Glock, *Anti-Semitism in America*, has recently appeared (Free Press, 1979). The limitations of the series were ably pointed out some years ago by Lucy S. Dawidowicz ("Can Anti-Semitism Be Measured?" COMMENTARY, July 1970).

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(1978), a volume about an overblown 1928 blood-libel incident in a small upstate New York town, is less prophetic and more emphatic: "it *did* happen here." "It" was that four-year-old Barbara Griffiths disappeared two days before Yom Kippur; officials asked Jews whether "your people in the old country offer human sacrifices"; the village rabbi acquitted himself well; and a few hours later the girl emerged on her own from the woods, to the great relief of all concerned. Jewish defense organizations only became involved in the incident later on, and used it to arouse and educate the public. At least half a dozen other such incidents have occurred in American Jewish history, receiving hardly any notice at all. But as far as Friedman is concerned, "the shades of the tragedy to befall Europe's Jews . . . were all contained in the aftermath of the incident at Massena." Indeed, the horrors of Massena "might yet be duplicated in our own day."

Albert Lee, author of the newly published *Henry Ford and the Jews*,* thinks that the Holocaust came even closer to America's shores than does Friedman. Not content with existing studies which trace Ford's ravings on the "International Jew" both to the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and to the domestic concerns of Middle America, Lee asserts on the slimmest of evidence that Ford served as an inspiration to Adolf Hitler, who merely "plagiarized" Ford's arguments: "the words are different; the thoughts are identical."

The main contours of Lee's story are well known. Ford's Dearborn *Independent* commenced its attacks on the supposed machinations of Jews in 1920 and continued the assault for most of the next seven years. In 1927 Ford "apologized" to Louis Marshall, probably to avoid a libel suit; thereafter he kept his feelings about Jews largely to himself. The many reasons Lee sets forth to explain Ford's obsession with Jews—the impact of populism on his thinking, the impression made on him by the East European immigration, the influence of Thomas Edison and the pro-German Edward Rumely, the failure of his World War I Peace Ship (which a Jewish woman named Rosika Schwimmer had convinced him to finance), the rise of Bolshevism, and assorted other traumas—have all been adduced before.† *Henry Ford and the Jews* differs only in viewing Ford as a "man who helped pave the road to Auschwitz" *and* who "might very well [*sic*] have been elected President of the United States." What saved America, Lee claims, was Ford's timidity, his "lack of a Dale Carnegie course in public speaking." Otherwise, he appears to think, this country too might have had a *Fuehrer* at its helm.

As THESE books demonstrate, we have moved in just half a century from the myth that America is different to the myth that America is not different at all. By itself this transformation speaks volumes about loss of faith in American institutions and dreams. Yet uncritical condemnation of America is just as unwarranted, as misleading, and as dangerous from the point of view of Jewish interests as uncritical celebration. America *is* different, and it is not Nazi Germany. At the risk of oversimplification, let me spell out four such differences as they relate to anti-Semitism.

1. In America, Jews have always fought anti-Semites freely. Never having received their emancipation as an "award," they have had no fears of losing it. Instead, from the beginning they made full use of their rights to freedom of speech. As early as 1784, a "Jew Broker"—probably Haym Salomon—responded publicly and forcefully to the anti-Semitic charges of a prominent Quaker lawyer, not hesitating to remind him that his "own religious sectary" could also form "very proper subjects of criticism and animadversion." A few years later, Christian missionaries and their supporters faced Jewish polemics no less strident in tone. Where European Jews prided themselves on their "forbearance" in the face of attack, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise boasted that he was a "malicious, biting, pugnacious, challenging, and mocking monster of the pen." Louis Marshall and Stephen Wise, early 20th-century spokesmen of American Jewry, may have been more civil, but as readers of their voluminous letters know, they were no less bold. In defense of Jewish rights, they did battle even with the President of the United States.

2. American anti-Semitism has always had to compete with other forms of animus. Racism, anti-Quakerism, Anglophobia, anti-Catholicism, anti-Masonry, anti-Mormonism, anti-Orientalism, nativism, anti-Teutonism, primitive anti-Communism—these and other waves have periodically swept over the American landscape, scarring and battering citizens. Because hatred is so varied and diffused, no group experiences for long the full brunt of national odium. Furthermore, most Americans retain bitter memories of days past when they or their ancestors were the objects of malevolence. At least in some cases, this leads them to exercise restraint. The American strain of anti-Semitism is thus less potent than its European counterpart, and it faces a larger number of natural competitors. To reach epidemic proportions, it must first crowd out a vast number of contending hatreds.

3. Anti-Semitism is more foreign to American ideals than to European ones. The central documents of the Republic assure Jews of liberty; its first President conferred upon them his blessing. The fact that anti-Semitism can properly be branded "un-American," while no protection in

* Stein and Day, 200 pp., $12.95.

† A greatly superior analysis, by Leo Ribuffo, has appeared in the June 1980 number of *American Jewish History*.

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the formal sense—the nation has betrayed its ideals innumerable times—grants Jews a measure of protection not found in Europe. There, anti-Semites could always claim a legitimacy stemming from times past when the *volk* ruled and Jews knew their place. American romantics could point to nothing even remotely similar in their own past. The Founding Fathers, whatever they personally thought of Jews, gave them full equality. "Who are you, or what are you . . . that in a *free* country you dare to trample on any sectary whatever of people," Haym Salomon had demanded back in 1784. Half a century later, Isaac Leeser charged that it was "contrary to the spirit of the Constitution of the country for the many to combine to do the smallest minority the injury of depriving them of their conscientious conviction by systematic efforts." Non-Jews could respond by pointing to America's supposedly "Christian character"—a view of American society occasionally recognized by no less august a body than the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, the Constitution has proved to be a potent weapon in the Jews' defense. German Jews could appeal to no similar document.

4. American politics resists anti-Semitism. In a two-party system where close elections are the rule, neither party can long afford to alienate any major bloc of voters. The politics of hatred have thus largely been confined to noisy third parties and single-issue fringe groups. When anti-Semitism is introduced into the political arena—as it has been periodically, since the days of the Federalists—major candidates generally repudiate it. America's most successful politicians build broad-based coalitions, highly nebulous in their ideology. They seek support from respectable elements all across the political spectrum. Experience has taught them that appeals to national unity win more elections than appeals to narrow provincialism or to bigotry.

FEARS of an American holocaust are thus greatly exaggerated. What we need today is to understand American anti-Semitism on its own terms. If the country has not been utter heaven for Jews, it has been as far from hell as Jews in the Diaspora have ever known. Broadly speaking, the American Jewish experience is unique. Determining precisely how, is one of the many tasks that lie ahead.

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Healing
A Story

Annette Henkin Landau

SOMETIMES, when they make love, Kate smooths Alan's flesh with her fingers and sees again the face of her young lover. Sometimes, when Alan sleeps, he looks eighteen again, but now she sees pouches beneath his eyes, little puckers around his mouth. He has lost his rosy summer tan, his skin is gray, fear lies unabashed in his eyes.

She talks tough to him. "You think you're scared, kiddo? How about a little sympathy for me?"

"If this turns out to be bad," he says, "they'll take my face away, piece by piece. What will you do then?"

She puts her hand on his thigh. "I'll start a little lower, lover," she says.

Success. She has made Alan smile.

A young nurse has come for him with a wheelchair. Alan's face is so elegant that even she responds to it. Narrow nose, slender chin, pale blue eyes. Kate brushes her lips against his cheek, touches his tight silver curls. Still establishing the franchise, she thinks.

Docile, he climbs out of bed into the wheelchair, looking very neat and tucked up, like a good schoolboy. They are going to take out the little lump he has inside his cheek and have a look at it. Biopsy. A simple procedure, the doctor says.

Alan hates pajamas. He likes to sleep naked or in his shorts. Early in their marriage, before they got used to each other, that angered her. It was a lower-middle-class way to sleep, she said, and she was lower-middle-class enough without being reminded of it in bed. But Alan, in his lordly way, slept as he pleased. Now she is not lower-middle-class any more, and now—for the nurse, for the hospital, for old man death—he wears pajamas. Kate feels tears.

The nurse wheels Alan down the hall. First there will be tests. Then Alan will be "prepped." The procedure itself will take an hour, another hour before he comes down from the recovery room. "He won't even know you're here for an hour after that," the young nurse has told her. "You might as well go home."

But Kate has decided to stay. She walks to the window and looks down at the hospital's crowded parking lot and the Long Island Expressway beyond it. She has a lot of time to kill.

The telephone rings next to Alan's empty bed. Kate hesitates, thinks it must be for someone else, then picks it up anyway.

It is Paula. She was hoping to catch Alan before he went to the operating room, she apologizes. She is calling on behalf of her whole office. They want to wish Alan luck. It is not an intrusion, she trusts.

When Kate talks to Paula the years depart briefly. For a moment she sees Paula as she was in law school, a serious, slender young woman. Paula does something with her voice when she talks to Kate. She makes it sound professional. It is her lawyer voice and it vibrates with discreet, unspoken words—*long ago, forgotten now, no need for anger, Kate.*

Kate doesn't care if her own voice is murderous. Die in excruciating pain, bitch. Hair turned gray? A little thick around the middle, are you? Hips too broad? Serves you damn right.

"Tell them all thank you," she says.

She has, on occasion, lifted the phone in her kitchen and heard Alan talking to Paula on the extension in his study. Perfectly natural. Paula's firm does business with Alan's. She puts on a "just colleagues" voice for such occasions. It infuriates Kate. She slams out of the house, drives around until she has cooled off, returns at last to Alan's pained and chastened face.

Now she picks up her coat and walks out of the hospital room. The little nurse is sitting at the station near the elevators. She is not very pretty, Kate notes.

"Oh, you're going home," chirps the nurse. "Good idea."

Kate's anger melts. She's only a kid, younger than Jason.

"I think I'll drive out on the Island for a while," she says. "The leaves are turning."

"Do some shopping," the nurse advises.

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KATE watches the parkway unfurl itself. The trees are almost red, almost gold. In a week a telephone call will let them know the nature of the tissue they are slicing off Alan's tender cheek, its temperament, its structure, its intentions. Not to be too pessimistic says the great man, the witch doctor. Nor too optimistic. The auguries will tell.

Kate drives swiftly. How many times in Jason's troubled childhood had she flung herself into her car and headed east? East to Montauk and off the end of the parkway into the boiling sea.

A fantasy, of course. In truth she never went that far. Would turn around somewhere in the middle of the Island where the great suburban cemeteries begin, tombstones flat to the ground, no angels or "ever in our hearts" allowed. Alan's parents are buried in one of them, she and Alan have plots nearby. She wonders if Jason knows.

Far out on the Island there are old villages with churchyards in the middle of the town. On Main Street. People buried with their friends, relatives, enemies, neighbors. Grandchildren knowing where their grandparents are.

She never got as far as the Montauk lighthouse. Turned around because Jason needed her, crying in the principal's office, expelled from a birthday party, waiting for her at the psychiatrist's.

"What makes you do such things, Jason?"

A little boy with angry eyes. "I don't know."

A long time since they have seen Jason, that skinny exile. Kate tries to think of him on his hill in Oregon, sitting beside his potter's kiln, making wonderful shapes of clay and color with the flexible artist's fingers he has inherited from his accountant father. Tries to see as well, Linda, his friend, lover, roommate, whatever. The mother of Kate's grandchild. She pictures Linda thin-faced, bird-boned, barefoot. With long brown hair. But who knows? When Jason telephoned to tell them the baby had been born (it was nice of him), after she said, How much does he weigh (he didn't know), it wasn't possible to ask, What does his mother look like?

And what does he look like, this unknown grandson with his long Hindustani name (fourteen letters in his first name alone) who has set up housekeeping in her heart since the day of Jason's telephone call? She plays with him sometimes in a waking dream, holding him in her arms, dancing him around the room. A dream of second chances.

OLD marriages, old wounds. An old, bitter wound in this one. When Kate was pregnant with Jason, Alan left her for Paula. Alan never wants to talk about it, but Kate cannot let it alone. When Kate was pregnant with Jason, Alan left her for Paula. Long ago. Long over. Her pain lies dormant for seasons, then suddenly awakes and chews its fierce way out. She cannot forgive him.

There was once a different Kate, a chubby girl in sneakers, terrific lindy-hopper. A clever solemn boy was her friend, her lover. Handsome Alan. He married her. He could have done better, of course. Everyone said so.

She remembers a different Paula too, smart girl Paula, a woman before her time, the equal of Alan in every way. And she remembers Alan, distracted and nervous, forgetting to come home, not eating. And one night he simply tells her.

A towering betrayal. Her poor swollen body shudders and trembles. "Please," says Alan, "don't shake like that." But she cannot help it.

When Jason is born Alan returns, contrite. "Take me back, Katie, I love you." And she does. He is, after all, Jason's father. And the man of her dreams.

And out of it all comes a new Kate, a painstaking facsimile of the old one, the core of her shattered and glued together, at the core of the core an uncrushable stone. The old Kate is gone. He never gets her back again, that blithe and sunny girl, that dancing clown.

He had to do it for the experience, he says. They were so young when they got married.

Horseshit. He wanted sex? Who told him not to have sex? He didn't have to desert her for it. Not when she was pregnant.

He doesn't buy that. That's the new Kate, talking liberated. Who told little Alan not to have sex? Everybody.

"It's ancient history," says Alan in misery.

"Quaint," says Kate.

From Alan's childhood, another answer: October 1929, the stock market crashes and Alan's father, Herman the wheeler-dealer, moves his mistress Angelina from her Madison Avenue apartment to their house in Queens. In their innocence his parents instruct Alan to call her "Aunt Angie."

Talk about forgiveness! "Why did your mother put up with it? She must have been crazy."

"It was lonesome in Queens. She was happy to have company."

Maybe. In the middle of the night Alan would hear his mother yelling. He would double the pillow over his ears.

In Kate's heart another answer: she doesn't know why he came back. He really could have done better.

How to tell the psychiatrist about Jason?

When Alan leaves her alone to her pregnancy, it is as if she has fallen into a well in which she cannot drown, from which she cannot be extricated, condemned forever to its narrow embrace. The doctor gives her pills, uppers, downers, inside-outers. Alan's drunken babe reels inside of her.

"Where is the father?" the harried resident asks in the delivery room as Jason is put into her arms and her tears fall on his squashed little face, and

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she feels for him a melting, treasonous yearning, deep in her womb, real as lust. And a stone in her heart that she does not know is anger.

Where is the father? In Wilmington, Delaware, getting Paula an illegal abortion. From love, from stupidity, from fear of fatherhood, from the memory of Herman's bare feet slapping down the hall to Angelina's room, he has made her pregnant too. "The father is dead," she says.

No. Start again.

Jason came plunging out of my womb, she says, howling his disaffection for the world. Jason flailed at my breast with perfect tiny fingers, as if he were drinking vinegar and bile.

When Jason was a little boy, she says, he kicked the third grade teacher and was expelled.

When Jason was in junior high, she says, he let his hair grow long. The principal sewed ruffles on his pants to teach him not to look like a girl.

In high school Jason smoked pot in the parking lot. He was suspended.

When the revolution came, she says, it loved Jason. It dropped a rock on his head at Columbia, clubbed him on the ear at Whitehall Street, gave him a bum trip in Cambridge and a couple of nights in a Chicago jail. By a fluke he missed Kent State, but the FBI got pictures of him pounding on Nixon's car in San Jose.

And one morning at two o'clock the telephone rings. It is the police. They have been chasing Jason all night as he ran naked down the parkways, in and out of the shrubbery, between the headlights. They have found him at last in a Texaco station, lying in a pool of black grease next to the dumpster, clutching his crotch in his unconscious hand.

IN the beer cans and the trash. My love. My little boy. My Jason.

SHE has reached the cemeteries. She turns the car around and drives back to the hospital. She still has time to wait. He had better not say "Paula" when he comes out of the anesthesia, she thinks.

He doesn't, of course. She sits beside the bed and holds his hand. Alan's mouth is swollen, blood-streaked, but his face is intact, the stitches inside.

"Katie," he says, but that is all he is able to say.

THEY have a week for waiting, a week to deal with apprehension. Make time go faster. Slower. Something.

"Let's go to Jones Beach," says Kate one morning. "We can watch the lovers making out on the boardwalk."

Alan laughs, agrees to let her drive him there. The lovers on autumn days are all old couples, some men and women, but mostly women together. Many varieties of Middle European accents. The women have a joke. Now we are married to each other, they say.

A flash of insight comes to Kate as she drives. "When you came back to me, Alan, was it because I made you laugh?"

"Lay off me, Katie, I'm a sick man."

She drives silently.

But he touches her hair. "I want you to forget it," he says. "I want you to forgive me. I want it never to have happened."

What is forgiveness? she asks herself.

No answer.

ON the boardwalk Alan recalls the Jones Beach of his childhood, before Robert Moses discovered it, he says.

"Over there," he points, "was a long, long jetty." His father and he would fish from it. For flounder. Blues. Mostly nothing.

"Did your mother come with you?"

"No, but Angie did. Sometimes."

Kate squints against the sparkling sea, the golden sand, picturing quiet little curly-haired Alan in knickers, with his dazzling old man and the old man's dark-eyed, hoarse-voiced mistress. Both of them dead now. Alan's mother too. That unholy trio.

She remembers Jones Beach on their high-school dates, a rosy brick complex with an obelisk, a sinuous boardwalk, pavilions for skating and dancing and shooting arrows. A wonderful, cheap, romantic place. A gift to the people.

"It never changes," says Kate. "That's why I love it."

"We change," says Alan.

"Not so much. I'm still fat and you're still beautiful."

Alan winces when he laughs. The stitches pull. Nevertheless, she makes him laugh.

In front of one of the red brick buildings the old people are sunning themselves in beach chairs. A couple on a bench catches Kate's eye as they pass. The woman's face is tracked with wrinkles, but she has a golden wig. The man is gaunt, a skeletal man, his eyes fixed on the distant sky. Her hand is on his arm and she is leaning forward, talking directly into his face as if to detain him. But it is really too late, he is already gone. Kate shivers.

They stop at the old dance pavilion. It is silent and empty, the season over. In the summer people still dance there, feet sticking and dragging on the cement floor. Middle-aged people dancing the dances of their youth under the stars. Sometimes a rock band comes and the kids dance too. But the grown-ups can't dance with their children, the music separates them.

"You were a great dancer," says Alan.

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Kate points with a flourish to the pavilion. "Have you any idea what happened on that dance floor? On that dance floor Katie Singer first felt sexual desire."

"Where's the plaque?"

"It used to be over there, but Puerto Ricans stole it."

She leans against him and he holds her. "Who'd you feel it for?" he says. "Me?"

"Who else?" Clowning for him. "Such a virgin like I was?"

Along with the stitches the hospital has given him tears. She brushes them with her fingers.

"I don't want to die," he says.

"Cut it out, Alan. I'm running out of jokes."

ALAN is healing, the tender cheek not so afflicted as it was. His fingers turn the pages of *Time* magazine, but he is not reading. The television is fluttering beside his chair, the sound turned off. In Alan's pale eyes she sees memory and pain. Alan is thinking about life, about Jason.

Kate cannot bear to see him so introspective. She wishes he would watch a basketball game. She sits on the arm of his chair to distract him, curls his hair seductively around her finger.

She aims for a Hungarian courtesan's accent. "Let me entertain you," she says, not very convincingly.

"How about a belly dance?" says Alan, turning pages.

"I'm out of practice. How about some pot?"

He looks up at her. "You don't really have any."

"I do. I found it in Jason's closet. In the corner. Does it matter if it's old?"

Alan is laughing. "You don't know how to roll it."

"I've been practicing."

"OK, but in case it doesn't work let's have martinis too."

They begin by alternating gravely. He hands her the glass, she hands him the joint. A sip, a puff. They watch each other for symptoms.

"You're supposed to swallow it," he says.

"I am swallowing it."

"The smoke, not the drink."

"I'm not supposed to swallow the drink?" she giggles. "I'm supposed to sniff it up my nose?"

Alan finds that hilarious.

Between them, expanding and contracting, Kate sees bands of energy rising in undulating waves from the floor. Through the waves a regal Alan approaches, a great, wide, lascivious smile floating two inches off his face. She is so happy to see him alive and well that she says Long Live the King and performs for his highness her daring, death-defying act. Encore after encore, until exhausted she falls to the ground.

When they are awake they are naked on the scratchy carpet of the staircase landing. Alan is playing scales on her spine. "You loved that," he croons. She crosses her eyes, makes a face at him. "It was all right."

"Come on. You loved it, You know you did."

She rises, staggering. They guide each other to bed. "If I say I loved it," she says, "you'll want to do it all the time."

IN THE morning she is asleep when the telephone rings. Alan races to answer it. Instantly she is awake. It is too soon for the hospital report, but she hears Alan's elated voice and she thinks briefly, maybe. Maybe it's OK.

Alan returns and pulls her out of bed. His face is shining, his voice jubilant. "That was Jason. And Linda. They're coming to visit us, they're at the airport. Bringing the baby, Rabindranath Tagore, whatever his name is."

They hug each other rapturously, Kate so flooded with rejoicing that she is in tears.

Alan does a little naked dance. "I'm going to be a grandfather," he sings.

THEY celebrate all day. Kate decides to cook something complicated. They drive to the docks and admire the boats, slender sailboats and fat cabin cruisers. Alan thinks some day they might have a sailboat. Kate lets him think so.

She is so happy that she talks to everyone. Heaps of silver and gold fish are piled on the wharf, fresh off the boats. The wharf is crowded with thrifty housewives, bargain hunters. She exchanges recipes with an Indian woman in a sari. A young black woman, her hair in elegant cornrows, listens in and nods agreement. Kate splurges on lobster, halibut, crabs, oysters, mussels, extra fish heads. The two women clap their hands, applauding her choices.

"My grandson is coming to visit," she tells them. "We're going to have a feast."

"God," says Alan, "you're not going to feed that to the baby?"

The three women fall into giggles.

They cook the fish stew together, Kate laughing at Alan's ineptness. She accuses him of purposeful clumsiness. He doesn't really want to help. He denies it, picks up a fish head, pretends to drop it down the front of her shirt. She shrieks. They hug, kiss, behave like children. They are very nervous.

In the evening Jason and Linda arrive. Jason is very tan. He has put on weight. He has a dark beard. He puts his arms around Alan and kisses him. Alan cries.

Linda is taller than Kate expected, larger-boned, fair-haired. She has a lovely, plain, open face, round glasses, a true smile. Someone, thinks Kate approvingly, has taken good care of her.

The baby is sleeping on Linda's breast in a cloth cradle hung from her shoulders. Kate touches him, awed. He looks like Jason.

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AT NIGHT, lying beside Alan, a thought comes to Kate. "How did Jason know you were sick?"

Alan is silent.

"Alan? Are you sleeping?"

"Paula called him," says Alan.

Kate stares silently at the ceiling.

"Are you angry?" he says.

"Why doesn't Paula get out of my life?"

"She feels bad about you. She wants to feel better, I guess. By doing something for you."

"For you."

"I guess so. For herself too. Kate, are you angry?"

Tears slip from the corners of Kate's eyes. He kisses her, licks the tears. "Dear old friend," he says, "are you ever going to forgive me?"

Kate sniffs. "If she comes to your funeral it will ruin my whole day."

Alan rolls over, wrestles her, pins her to the bed. They are both laughing. "Rotten person," he says, loving her.

Luck is with them. God, how we have loved each other's flesh, she thinks. They fall asleep, feet entangled. Kate dreams.

In her dream they are children. There is a school bus on the road, and a brook. Golden hairs gleam on the back of Alan's neck as he walks toward the bus. Where are you going? she calls to him, but his back is turned and he does not answer. He is wearing an old-fashioned jacket and it makes her laugh out loud.

Don't leave without me, Alan, she says.

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Portrait of a Hero

Ruth R. Wisse

THE general-information section of the Israel telephone directory contains a significant guide to the collective consciousness of the country. Because the demand for new phones has always exceeded the supply, each directory includes a priority list explaining the official policy of distribution. Elected officials head the list, and are followed by the army, hospitals, fire stations, the Red Magen David, and police. The next stratum consists of government offices, embassies and consulates, and major services. Then the list turns from institutional to private allocations, where the notion of "priority" shifts sharply. The private section is headed by doctors, followed by:

Parents of soldiers killed in action
Parents of missing soldiers or prisoners of war
Widows of soldiers killed in action
Wives of missing soldiers and prisoners of war
Parents and widows of persons killed by enemy action

Next come the heavily disabled (at least 80 percent disability), under several sub-headings:

Disabled ex-servicemen
Disabled as a result of resistance against the Nazis
Disabled as a result of enemy action

All these take precedence over public institutions such as banks, businesses, hotels, schools, and transportation facilities.

No doubt many Israelis, if reminded of this list, would draw ironic attention to the missing factor of *protektsia* (*patronage* in French, cronyism in English) which has a way of reordering all priorities in that country. Or they would wonder aloud at the fact that the national telephone system, so many years after statehood, still cannot satisfy all its potential customers. The gap between the ideal and the reality does not close, in Israel, much faster than elsewhere. Nonetheless, the carefully discriminating, frequently revised priorities list defines the citizenry it serves. The national indebtedness to the families of soldiers, greater even than to the injured, expresses the common recognition that but for the willingness of its children and husbands to sacrifice their lives in its defense, Israel would not exist.

While honoring the dead, such a formulation of value also affirms a certain expectation of the living. The intrusion of national memory and obligation into an apparently neutral and commonplace item like the telephone book is characteristic of Israel, where it has never been possible to insulate "normal daily life" from the efforts that must be made to protect it. This natural—or inescapable—awareness helps to explain the personality of Jonathan Netanyahu, the young Israeli who became a posthumous hero when he was killed while commanding the brilliant raid on Entebbe airport of July 4, 1976, which freed 103 Jewish hostages held by terrorists. His letters, first collected by his surviving younger brothers and published in Israel, now translated into English with their explanatory notes, trace Netanyahu's fully conscious progress toward that end.*

The letters of "Yoni"—as he was known to all—cover thirteen years, from the spring of 1963 when his family moved to America, to June 29, 1976, shortly before his death. The earliest letters are of a boy of seventeen, writing to his former classmates in Jerusalem from unfamiliar surroundings in Philadelphia. In the process of uprooting, which sharpened his attachment to Israel and his self-awareness, he began using letters to reexamine his relation to people and places. This talent for correspondence later flourished when Netanyahu returned to serve in the army, as native Israelis are required to do at eighteen. Separated thereafter from his parents, and from his younger brothers until they returned home at the start of *their* army service, he provided generous, frank accounts of himself and his blisteringly rapid progress.

THE collected letters span an eventful life: Netanyahu's exploits as a paratrooper and an officer; his discharge, remobilization, and service in the Six-Day War of 1967; his marriage, which ended in painful divorce; several intervals of civilian life including a year's study at Harvard and some impressionable travels; the earnestly considered return to military service and the unique record of leadership that concluded with his command, at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, of the elite unit that launched the raid on Entebbe. Free of literary self-consciousness, the unfolding story retroactively, spontaneously, assumes the contour of a first-person novel with a recognizable hero.

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* *Self-Portrait of a Hero: The Letters of Jonathan Netanyahu (1963-1976)*, with notes and an afterword by Benjamin and Iddo Netanyahu, introduction by Herman Wouk, Random House, 304 pp., $12.95.

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The character of the writer compels attention. Rarely is the habit of thoughtful introspection combined, as it is here, with such purposeful striving in the world of work and accomplishment, especially of the military variety. With a cool awareness of his own ability, Netanyahu took up what he perceived to be the greatest challenges, enjoying the process of achievement far more than the accruing of rewards. ("Incidentally, a little over two weeks ago I was made a major.") He objected to the notion that it was the army which supplied a sense of purpose, and gently scolded his younger brother for idolizing the paratroopers and belittling his own studies. Purpose came from within. "As you know," he wrote to his family about several weeks that followed his army discharge, during which he had worked his way up from porter to gardener to independent contractor, "when I decide to do something, I devote myself completely to the matter at hand and cannot do anything else, since I have to do things perfectly. It's not a matter of principle or calculated decision, it's simply the way I am."

This penchant for self-dedication he traced to his father, Benzion Netanyahu, prominent Jewish historian, who served as editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* from 1948 to 1965. Though he does not explicitly make the connection, the son's choice of military service led him into the forefront of an unfolding Jewish history with the same zeal that his father applied to its reconstruction. It was aimlessness he found hard to understand, as represented by the pointless meanderings of characters he saw in a Pinter play, or in his encounters with young Americans in Boston, "caught up in endless frustration and . . . unable to progress beyond the infantile stage." He speaks of them like a sorrowing parent, mourning the waste of so much promise.

THE feeling of responsible involvement that riveted Netanyahu's attention to the fate of his people transforms this personal correspondence into a document of historical import. As it happens, Netanyahu was born shortly before the creation of the state of Israel, and the account of his maturation often seems to embody a broader collective process of testing and consolidation. Significant stretches of his young manhood in the mid-1960's were spent on hiking expeditions that reinforced a knowledge and love of the land. Even the tension of the spring of 1967, following Nasser's blockade of the Straits of Tiran and the military encirclement of Israel, did not dull the national morale which he describes as high, "you might even say sky high." Surrounded by his fellow reservists, family men who hoped war would be averted, he remained certain that if it did come, "we can't lose. Our men are just too good." His judgment here as elsewhere did not refer to technological mastery but to human mettle, the moral resiliency of those in his command.

The period immediately following the Six-Day War—in which Netanyahu was wounded—provided a brief respite from the steady vigilance of the preceding years, since everyone was sure that the decisive victory would guarantee at least a decade's, if not permanent, peace. During this interval Yoni married and went off to study at Harvard. Instead of the anticipated improvement, however, there came the War of Attrition along the Suez Canal, multiplying acts of terrorism, and the broadening diplomatic war against Israel that strained the country's patience and resources. One can feel the twin pressure of family and personal ambition when Netanyahu rejoined the army. He writes to his wife:

> Anyone who has something to contribute at present ought to do it. I believe that the Jewish people's survival depends largely on Israel—and more than that: that Israel's survival depends on us—on our capabilities and staying power. It's enough to read just once all the war slogans of our tens of millions of neighbors, to note their hatred and desire to annihilate us (including you, my wife) to get an extra boost and encouragement for my staying on in the army.

The prose appears to stiffen with the resolve.

But it proved impossible to maintain a consistent family life between anti-terrorist raids. While Israel's tiny size encouraged close physical ties to civilian duties, the nature of Netanyahu's work in a reconnaisance unit exposed him to dangers he could not share and seemed to weigh him down with sadness. The most disturbing letters tell of his divorce, which he accepted numbly.

With age and rank, he faced a much broader range of problems. One could take pleasure, as he did, in whipping a battalion into perfect shape, but even a flawless army could not offset the diplomatic victories he saw the Arabs winning with oil. The corollary of his passionate concern for Israel was an intense disgust with internal political intrigue and occasional signs of demoralization. "What's needed is wisdom to fight the isolation that's closing in on us, but there are no wise men in Israel."

For many reasons the letters of the last years, particularly after the Yom Kippur War, leave much unsaid. Netanyahu did not like to write about war; his exploits in the anti-terrorist unit, the stuff of so many contemporary thrillers, are only alluded to in the book's accompanying notes. He wrote on the road, with frequent interruptions, regretting the need for haste. In some ways, the struggle he does describe, trying to make sense of the critical position he had elected as his own, reveals the same steady courage he showed on the battlefield, for which he was decorated.

In that inner struggle, he managed to maintain his belief in the significance of individual action. The demands he made on himself were never extended to others, but philosophically, his unwavering emphasis on meaningful choice—in his case, the decision to protect his community from harm—was intended to inspire those around him with confidence in *their* future. The importance of this posture extends beyond the confines of the particular situation in Israel, because Netanyahu did not understand his own life as being separate

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from the world; rather, he was a man in a community whose persistence and fidelity might strengthen humanity with a much-needed example.

CONFINED though this book is to the experience of a single young man, it actually carries the imprint of his entire family, not only because his brothers collected the letters and gave the book its shape, but because they and their parents are so prominent in the writer's thoughts. Paradoxically, the absence of his family members from Israel while Netanyahu was in the army intensified their importance to him. He says so, in letters frankly lonesome, despite the warmth shown him by a local substitute family and his many relatives. His whole notion of the Jewish people emerges in the image of the family, with Israel protecting those in the dispersion, and himself at the center of it all.

Within this unit of kinship, Netanyahu seemed to take for himself the role of father. For his own father he expressed unambiguous admiration and love, as when he writes, after receiving his father's new book, *The Marranos of Spain*, "I never told you how proud I am of your being the man you are, of my being your son." The many letters to his parents, who evidently wanted him to continue his studies, offer thorough explanations, but no apologies, for deciding not to do so.

At the same time, the younger Netanyahu assumed for himself a different branch and style of responsibility. He repeatedly interrupted his studies to return to the army, all the while encouraging his father to stay abroad so that *he* might pursue his historical research under the best possible circumstances. He writes to his brothers like a tender parent, without condescension, but as if they were in his care. He is never happier—or more effective—than when he is the commander of his unit. The woman he loves he addresses as "my child," and writes to as gently.

One of the anomalies of Israeli life, often noted by its observers, is the constant need for the children to be defending their parents. Since the country's military strength has not yet guaranteed its acceptance in the region, the danger threatens every household, hastening the independence of the young but also, because they are virtually indispensable, encumbering them with duty and a sense of foreboding. Netanyahu was characteristic of his generation: he simply took on more.

IN ITS shape and vividness, this book invites comparison with crafted autobiographies and works of fiction rather more than with the testimonial volumes in memory of fallen soldiers that are so numerous in Israel as to have become a modern genre. It particularly calls to mind the novella, "Early in the Summer of 1970," by the Israeli writer, A.B. Yehoshua,* which concerns the death-in-action of a young man, just about Netanyahu's age, as it is experienced by his father, a teacher of Bible. Yehoshua's fable draws attention to its own literary properties, almost as though it fears being mistaken for a realistic work. Over and over again in it the father relives the moment when he learned that his son had been killed—until, through his torment, we begin to recognize that he may have required his son's death, that for this teacher of Bible, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac has become a social imperative.

When the father goes to identify the body, it turns out not to be his son. But whether, like Isaac, the boy has been spared, or whether he has been sacrificed on another altar, the story does not say. It lingers on the single, complex moment of the father's despair:

> And there are those who do not come back. Several already. A few disappear. And something withers in me. I remain troubled. This pain of theirs, the advantage of an experience in which I have no share. And even those who do come back, though they walk with their children and their shopping baskets, there is something veiled in their eyes, they stare at me blankly, almost ignore me, as though I had deceived them somewhere. I mean, as though I had deceived them with the very subject matter itself. As if everything we taught them—the laws, the proverbs, the prophecies—had all collapsed for them out there, in the dust, the scorching fires, the lonely nights. All of it had failed the test of some other reality. . . .

Netanyahu, the son of a different father, did not feel himself deceived. To the contrary, all he had learned from Jewish history he reinterpreted for himself, and then reinforced the lesson by his actions.

> Tomorrow is Passover. . . . When I go back over our history, I pass through long years of suffering, of oppression, of massacres, of ghettos, of banishments, of humiliation; many years that . . . seem devoid of light—yet it isn't so. For the fact that the idea of freedom remained, that the flame of liberty continued to burn through the observance of this ancient festival, is to me testimony of the eternity of the striving for freedom and the idea of freedom in Israel. . . .
>
> I clearly remember one Seder in Talpiot, in Jerusalem, when I was six. Among the guests were white-bearded old men like Rabbi Binyamin and Professor Klausner, and my father was there too, and others I don't remember, and there was a big table and much light, and I was in a completely perfect world, and I kept absorbing it and absorbing it. Storing up impressions of a great and beautiful world with myself in it—taking it in, as it were, to sort it all out in adulthood—yet today I know it wasn't in order to sort it out, but to treasure it that I took it all in.
>
> Last year I celebrated Seder with my men in a big tent near a *tel* in the Syrian enclave that was being shelled, and that too was a wonderful Seder in its way. . . .

The depression that haunts so much modern Israeli fiction, that throbs, for example, in Yehoshua's story, is also present in some of Netanyahu's descriptions of the deaths of his fellow officers and men, and in his own weariness at having for so long to hold the line; unlike in Yehoshua's story, however, it is never accompanied by sentimental-

* This story was published in COMMENTARY, March 1973.

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ity, or by a mood of moral surrender. Even more than the facts of his life, the record of Netanyahu's thinking confirms the spirit that sustains Israel as a nation, if not its writers. That spirit, which is vital, noble, generous, and free, Netanyahu ceaselessly reflected upon and sought to instill in others, for many of whom (to judge from the statements appended to this volume by his second-in-command, by the chief of military intelligence, and by Shimon Peres, and from remarks cited throughout by his brothers) he was at once its incarnation and entirely compelling proof of its universal value.

Music

American Music: The Years of Hope

Samuel Lipman

ON ONE of the accreditation visits which European guardians of cultural life periodically pay us, the polyglot literary critic George Steiner has measured America and found it, as ever, wanting. Writing in the quarterly *Salmagundi* (Fall 1980/Winter 1981), he rejects the creative significance of our entire society, accusing us of having produced nothing, save some literature, of original importance. What virtues we have, in his view, are either importations from the old country or applications of wealth and energy to the conserving of otherwise alien artifacts.

In his strictures Steiner says a great deal about our musical life as well, and ventures a broad characterization of American efforts in composition. The passage is worth quoting at some length:

> Roger Sessions, Elliott Carter are composers of undoubted stature. Charles Ives is a most intriguing "original." Up to this point in its history, however, American music has been of an essentially provincial character. The great symphony of "the new world" is by Dvorák. It is Varèse's *Amériques* which comes nearest to a musical transposition of its spacious subject. Again, limiting oneself to the 20th century—a limitation inherently weighted in America's favor—it is obvious that there are in American music no names to set beside those of Stravinsky, of Schoenberg, of Bartók, of Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, that the *oeuvre* of a Prokofiev, of a Shostakovich, perhaps even of a Benjamin Britten represents an executive "density" and imaginative continuity strikingly absent from the work of American composers. And even if the Stockhausen-Boulez era is now passing, its role, its formal and substantive logic in the history of Western music, are on a level which, until now, American composers have rarely challenged, let alone matched.

To answer this comprehensive charge in Steiner's terms is to deal with it on the ground staked out by his admirably skillful use of language. Although he limits his consideration to this century—a frame of reference he finds weighted in our favor—in fact all the figures he mentions, with the exception of Shostakovich and Britten, were formed musically well before World War I, that great watershed in high musical culture. And even here he hedges a bit, speaking only of the *oeuvre* of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Britten. Similarly, although he does not praise Boulez and Stockhausen explicitly, by mentioning their "formal and substantive logic" he manages to avoid giving the proper devil's due to John Cage.

Perhaps we ought to be inured to this sort of thing; Steiner's cultural diagnosis, after all, only carries on in the spirit of his predecessors, going all the way back to Mrs. Trollope. And yet—can it be denied that what he says about our music finds an extraordinary resonance in our own attitude toward ourselves? For what Steiner has done is only to echo, pointedly it is true, the verdict of our own musical institutions, large and small, rich and poor, superior and inferior; among these institutions I give, as is only proper, pride of place to our audience.

It takes no great perspicacity to observe that we are at this time securely a musical colony of Europe and of the musicians Europe has trained. Our great orchestras are, as if by right, in the hands of foreign *maestri*; even the aspiring ensem-

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bles of sunbelt and badlands feel the need to employ these missionaries to the heathen. As with conductors, so with soloists and singers. And since commercial developments do in fact mirror the expression of cultivated taste, we can hardly be surprised at the virtually complete withdrawal of major American companies from the domestic recording of serious music.

IN THE world of American composition, the situation is the same. The recent tenure of Pierre Boulez at the New York Philharmonic, intellectually and musically the most interesting such period in the domestic musical life of the past quarter century, was marked by expressed disdain for almost all our native products. Elsewhere new American works have been and are being played, but these performances arise out of a sense of duty and a consciousness of external pressure; it is not too much to say that each premiere has about it the palpable air of a final performance. The recent Kennedy Center American music competition, in which the works of even the most respected and best-known American composers were submitted, seems tacit confirmation of the general predicament of our creative situation. The meager result of the musical components of our 1976 Bicentennial celebration is, alas, another.

Was it always so? One piece of evidence suggests that things were once better, that American music in another day was marked both by hope and by a sense of fulfillment. The piece of evidence is the spate of birthdays of our grand old composers which we have been celebrating in the past few years. In 1980 Aaron Copland—a child of the century—was eighty; William Schuman and Samuel Barber were seventy; Virgil Thomson, at eighty-four, was given the accolade of a PBS special. And to round out our recent observances, three years ago Elliott Carter was seventy, and five years ago Roger Sessions was eighty.

The attention devoted to the birthday of Copland in particular suggests, as such events always do, that history is preferred to actuality. Yet the enjoyment with which today's audiences listen to Copland's music is undeniable; a Copland concert even does well at the box office. And public reaction to the now frequently played music of Barber and Schuman, though perhaps less full-blooded than in the case of Copland, carries the same message: this is our music, our sound, and our pleasure.

LET us then, for the moment, leave behind George Steiner's negative conclusions. Let us rather try to answer a valuable question posed in the headline of a recent article by Peter Davis in the New York *Times*: "America's Senior Composers—Why Was Their Impact Profound?" Davis's own answer stresses the relative simplicity and unity of the music scene of the 1930's and 1940's, as contrasted with today's fragmentation, and the fact that such men as Copland were the first American composers who were sufficiently free of the prior taint of Eurocentric academicism to use national materials and speak with a national voice.

Any attempt to expand and broaden Davis's answer, and to draw conclusions from it, should properly begin with a consideration of the remarkable confluence of creative talent born in the two decades centered on 1900. If we perform the unfashionable task of looking up birth dates, we will find that these years produced no fewer than eleven major American composers, all of whom have written a body of interesting, significant, and affecting music. Merely to name them in the order of their birthdates is to appreciate their riches. In 1893 Douglas Moore was born and in 1894 Walter Piston; in 1896 Virgil Thomson, Howard Hanson, and Roger Sessions; in 1897 Henry Cowell and in 1898 Roy Harris; in 1900 Aaron Copland; in 1908 Elliott Carter, and in 1910 Samuel Barber and William Schuman. Though none of these men is unknown—and a few of them have been the object of national attention—the music of several is today almost forgotten, and the music of others is honored more in the breach than in the hearing. For that reason it may be worthwhile to sketch, in however rudimentary a fashion, the achievement of these eleven composers.

TO BEGIN with Douglas Moore is to make clear the ground of American consciousness on which so many of these composers have stood. Moore's first mature work was the 1924 *Pageant of P.T. Barnum*. Some years after his innocent and happy treatment of America's favorite showman, he went on in 1938 to set Stephen Vincent Benet's *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. His last opera, the 1966 *Carry Nation*, is another example of his preoccupation with the American past. In the finest work of his career, the 1956 *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Moore wrote an American classic, capturing in high art for years to come the frontier sadness of failed dreams and opportunities, of personal disaster in a world of speculative uncertainty. Here is not America as viewed by Europeans; here is the real thing, the colors right and the balances finely tuned.

By contrast, the achievement of Walter Piston has nothing of overt nationalism about it at all. It is the achievement of an absolute musician, wide, solid, and full of musical beauty. Piston is best known for a lighter work, *The Incredible Flutist*, a ballet suite premiered in 1938 by the Boston Pops Orchestra and by no less famous an American conductor than Arthur Fiedler. More importantly, he wrote eight symphonies spanning the years 1937 to 1965, more than a half-dozen works for solo instruments and orchestra, and a wealth of chamber music. It is in his string quartets in particular that Piston's richness and profundity can be experienced; both the Second Quartet of 1935 and the Fifth Quartet of 1962 are complex works of pure music-making, and nothing short of masterly.

With Howard Hanson we come to one of the most distinguished all-around careers in the history of American music. By turns composer, music-school administrator, and tireless conductor of his own and his colleagues' works, Hanson is a romantic symphonist able to domesticate in his own music the influence of Sibelius and also of Rachmaninoff. In such an extraor-

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dinary work as his 1938 Third Symphony he has combined a rich Slavic-Nordic harmonic palette with open, long lined, characteristically American-sounding melodies.

LITTLE need be said here of Virgil Thomson, now rich in years and honors. His film scores from the mid-30's, *The Plough that Broke the Plains* and *The River*, are classics of that descriptive genre. On a more elevated level, he is perhaps the most accomplished setter of American speech rhythms ever to write serious music. He has managed in his two Gertrude Stein operas, the 1927-28 *Four Saints in Three Acts* and the 1947 *The Mother of Us All*, to make clear that which no amount of literary criticism seems yet to have found possible: the connection between the sophisticated expatriate modernism of the 1920's and its roots in plain American life.

As can be gathered even from George Steiner's limited praise, Roger Sessions has indeed been one of our most important composers. It can be said of him that in his quiet, self-effacing, and self-respecting way he has been our musical conscience. Open to influence but never an imitator, he first made his name with *The Black Maskers* of 1923. In his long career he has written nine symphonies, many of them in the years after 1958. The first of these later works—another of the numerous Third Symphonies of high quality which American composers have produced—is serene and uncompromising, a lesson in how musical dryness can be rich in feeling, and how dissonance need not rob harmonic structure of recognizable shape. His chamber music, too, including the string quartets of 1936 and 1951 and a 1958 string quintet, commands deep respect and enduring affection. His 1970 setting of Whitman's *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* is an altogether more penetrating and authentic work than Hindemith's 1946 treatment of the same words. Given Sessions's stature, it is a particular disgrace of an already shame-ridden industry that not one of his works is currently available in an up-to-date recording on a major commercial label.

Henry Cowell is, in the way which later came to full flower (and perhaps even went to seed) in the person of John Cage, a difficult and varied phenomenon to encompass. At one and the same time highly serious in his commitment to music and seemingly aimless in his unceasing experimentalism, Cowell was a lifelong propagandist for "New Musical Resources," as the title of his 1930 book put it. At first these new resources lay for him in unorthodox sounds—which included playing the keys of the piano with fists and elbows and plucking the strings inside in the fashion of a harp; but he was also an early innovator in complex rhythms and the serial ordering of composition. Cowell was deeply interested in music from cultures other than Western, and he was an early innovator in methods of musical indeterminacy, paving the way for post-World War II developments. At last he seemed to come to a kind of rest in his American past, utilizing the spirit of old tunes and forms in a music purged of the avant-garde. But even when we take into account the relative quietude of his later music, his entire career suggests not the arrival but the quest.

The reputation of Roy Harris can be described as a brilliant high followed by a slow descent into a kind of obsolescence. Of all the American Third Symphonies, his was the most successful; indeed it may well be our most frequently performed native symphony. His First Symphony, commissioned in 1933 and premiered the next year by Koussevitsky in Boston, combines rhythmic disjunctions and jerkiness with the beginnings of an identifiable melodic style. It was his particular brand of melody which was to make Harris's fame in 1937 with the Third Symphony. On occasion his reliance on the folk ethos—in, for example, the 1940 *Folksong* Symphony—makes it difficult to accept some of his work as belonging to an altogether serious genre. In his chamber music, however, the musical impulse seems refined, elegant, and moving. Harris's prolific output is another casualty of the current American recording scene.

IN contrast to the desuetude which has befallen so many American composers, Aaron Copland has become something of a legend in his own time. By melodic shape he has conquered, so fusing his style with the materials on which he has drawn that it remains a matter of fine speculation whether he has created the American sound or the American sound has created him. He has written always with effort and care, producing finely crafted scores never a minute too long and containing never a note too many. It is our loss that he stopped composing, or so it is believed, in the middle 1960's. Through his performing career, and especially through his genial personality, he has been a clear witness to the proposition that there can be an American music both serious and successful, both native and universal.

With Elliott Carter we arrive at an achievement—and a problem—very close to the heart of the contemporary composer's relation to his audience. That problem, simply put, involves the degree of complexity and heterogeneity which even educated listeners can reasonably be expected to comprehend. From beginnings not uninfluenced by Copland, if his 1939-43 *Elegy* is any evidence, Carter has taken a path of increasing severity and complexity, reaching in his music of the last three decades an intellectual density fascinating to performers and as yet bewildering to audiences. Still, at least as late as the 1965 Piano Concerto, the by-now classic American sound of wide-spaced melodies is audible in Carter's music; all that impedes an appreciation of this quality is the multiplicity of the notes, the sophistication of the rhythms which accompany them, and the formidable thickness of the texture in which they are embedded. Were the musical value of Carter's building blocks not so self-evident, no one would even make the attempt to understand his work; as it is, we are locked into trying.

Samuel Barber, whose recent

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death removed a figure of special distinction in our national music life, was vastly successful as a composer of instrumental music. His 1949 Piano Sonata is the most recent piece to have entered the international virtuoso repertory. His 1941 Violin Concerto and 1962 Piano Concerto are widely and successfully performed. As an orchestral composer he possessed the grand line, as his works demonstrate from the 1936 First Symphony on. His melodies and harmonies linger in the ear; once heard, the famous *Adagio for Strings*, also written in 1936, can never be forgotten. His vocal music, too, has a special prominence. Not one but two of his operas were performed by the Metropolitan Opera, itself hardly a recent booster of native efforts. While *Vanessa* (1958) had a promising start with the critics and public, it did not enter the repertory. *Antony and Cleopatra* (1966), written for the opening of the new Metropolitan Opera house at Lincoln Center, proved an initial disappointment. Still, listening to a tape of the original performance strongly suggests that here, too, Barber's music will last, and that his vocal music may well represent his finest achievement.

It is fitting to bring these thumbnail appreciations to a close with William Schuman, who is not only still composing but also still serving as spokesman and goad for an American music. Early in his writing career, his music seemed a combination of motor energy and a melodic line—if not an accompanying atmosphere—drawn from popular American music. These qualities are exemplified in the unjustly neglected 1942 Piano Concerto. Increasingly, however, a tragic, tightly dark-hued mood has become prominent in his music. In *To Thee, Old Cause* and the Ninth Symphony, both of 1968, this note is particularly pronounced; in the latter work, inspired by the monument in Rome to the Jews and Christians killed by the Nazis in the Ardeatine Caves, there is evident a new, almost demonic, quality developing out of his earlier rhythmic nervousness. Overall, he seems to be accepting with some nobility a downturn in the American fortunes he would rather have celebrated. His is a talent and a music as yet undervalued, even during his seventieth birthday year.

It is plain from even a cursory glance at these composers and their work that we have found no single, uniform style, no overarching similarity of musical approach, no consistently identifiable American character. Rather we have found conservatives and modernists, romantics and intellectuals, nationalists and cosmopolitans, the self-willed and the eclectic. What, then, links these diverse creators? Perhaps the unifying element is to be found not in output but in input, not in effect but in cause. Instead of trying to unify their music, it might be better to try to understand the world into which they were born and the world in which they wrote.

From the point of view of today's mood of apathy, cultural pessimism, and anomie, the turn of the century in this country seems a time of enthusiasm, optimism, and even integration. The frontier had been won; the domestic economy, though still subject to bubbles and panics, was expanding at a historically unparalleled rate; immigrants by the million were being easily absorbed; science and technology were prolonging life and making it easier; in extending its borders in both the Caribbean and the Orient, America was claiming its manifest destiny. At home, a call was also being heard to cultural greatness. The system of higher education was being modernized and professionalized; American painting was restless with the call of modernism, and museums and private collections all over the country were enlarging apace; in music, American orchestras—and the Metropolitan Opera—were in the process of becoming the equal of any in the world. For the first time in our history, an independent, broadly-based artistic culture was seen as an inevitable and desirable development.

Some of this momentum undoubtedly continued into the years before World War I. Nonetheless, the period of the 1910's and the early 1920's seem like plague years. Our intervention in Mexico, labor unrest at home, our backdoor entry into World War I, the demeaning peace negotiations at Versailles, the farce of Prohibition, the stench of corruption in national politics—in a few years our national self-image, especially as perceived by our culture-creating classes, had gone from Parsifal to something approaching an impotent rotter. Thus it was that, immediately after the war which America had fought to save democracy, Europe became the refuge of our best and brightest. For both Copland and Thomson, Paris in particular was the home of music, of art, of life. Nor were they alone; of our eleven composers, ten were in Europe for extended periods between the wars, most to study, some to live. Only William Schuman stayed home.

But this mass departure did not last. Most of our composers began coming home even during the 1920's. Copland's case is typical. By 1925 he had decided to return home to write a consciously American music. Virgil Thomson had been back in this country in 1923 and 1924 and returned periodically thereafter until the outbreak of World War II. By 1927 he was working with Gertrude Stein on *Four Saints*. Similarly, Moore had left Paris in 1921; Hanson had left Rome in 1924; Harris had left Paris (and his teacher Nadia Boulanger) in 1929.

The idea of America was in the air. Ernest Bloch, an American resident since 1916, wrote in 1926 a giant symphonic poem entitled simply *America*; based on traditional and folk sources, it ended with something very close to a national anthem. On a less exalted level, Douglas Moore had written his evocation of P.T. Barnum in 1924. In the 1930's this explicitly nationalist movement in music gathered steam; among the many examples of the trend are Randall Thompson's 1932 choral work, *Americana*, and Henry Cowell's 1937 *American Melting Pot* and the *Old American Country Set*.

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The concern of American artists with their homeland was undoubtedly increased after 1929 by the world-wide depression, which hit America with particular force. Family allowances and fellowships shrank, and for reasons both moral and economic the expatriate life no longer seemed supportable as it once had. The America these artists came home to was vastly different from what it had been just a few years before. The crash, far from being a cause of disorganization or revolution, had produced the powerful political reaction of the New Deal. Along with the effort to reconstruct the economy came a desire to build a new society, a confidence in our national toughness under adversity, and a belief in the future of native culture. World conditions furthered this American mood, not least among intellectuals; for many of them, the Popular Front, born of Stalin's desire for allies against Hitler, inspired respect both for the attractiveness of the masses and the goodness and power of the United States.

For musicians, the teeming America of the 1930's was no longer a simple extension of the Europe which had earlier enthralled them. Everywhere in America there was new musical life, as demonstrated by a large increase in orchestras and concerts (the majority of them privately financed), in music education all the way down to the elementary-school level, and above all in radio broadcasting both national and local. And, most gratifying to composers, audiences across the country were newly willing to listen to native products in a manner neither patronizing nor dutiful, but rather out of a desire for art as the shared experience of the community.

Americans had become more receptive not only to their own culture, but to musical culture in general. With the rise of Nazism, émigrés came at first from Hitler's Germany, then from Austria, and finally from all of Europe for shelter and employment. In this exodus were the most distinguished composers and performers of the age, who brought to American musical life a new energy and sophistication; their contribution was made on the basis of permanent residence, not, in the manner of today, as an incidental benefit scattered during concert tours.

It seems reasonable to speculate that our new national musical strength, though most prominently displayed in the rise of explicitly nationalist compositions, also must have deeply affected those artists who had no desire to write specifically "American" works. The music flowed from many composers in a hitherto unexampled (for America) richness, variety, and depth. Such diverse composers as Hanson, Piston, Sessions, and Barber, with all their different feelings about America and Europe, nonetheless partook with the nationalists of an enthusiasm for the creative possibilities here at home, and exemplified in their music the high seriousness of the national mood.

The first years of the 1940's saw a continuation of this momentum. The build-up to World War II concentrated the minds of the American people; the Japanese attack which finally brought us into the war completed the process of unification which had begun back in the late 1920's. So beguiling was this atmosphere that composers not infrequently succumbed to a kind of grandiosity which, as in the case of Randall Thompson's 1943 *The Testament of Freedom*, a musical setting of the words of Jefferson, quickly became its own punishment.

Victory, when it came, produced an unavoidable feeling of let-down, and the unstable peace that followed the war blurred the lines between good guys and bad guys that had been so clear in the 1930's. Then, too, travel once again became possible and even easy, exposing Americans once again to the blandishments of our musical mother countries where the wine was better and artists were truly respected.

Looming over all these factors was an overriding loss of national confidence. Slowest to appear in the economic arena, it was manifest first in politics. By 1947 it became clear that elements of both the Right and the Left had deserted the Center of the grand American wartime coalition, the one to support a new isolationism and the other to advocate sympathy for Soviet policies. In ideas, the prevailing tone of discussion was set by the rise of the existentialist philosophy associated with Heidegger and Sartre. Only in painting and to some extent in dance did American culture remain a world pace setter.

In music the American retreat was shown in various ways both public and private. A mini-generation of European artists, blocked from world careers by war, now toured the United States in force. The fact of cheaper wages abroad, aided by a union ban on domestic recording here, spurred the takeover of the American recording market by European labels and artists. The most gifted American music students, performers and composers alike, began once again to go to Europe in droves to study; in this they were aided by imaginative federal government subsidies.

In composition the late 1940's saw the initial triumph of what has been called the Second Viennese School, but which might with equal justice be called the First School of Paris. René Leibowitz and Olivier Messiaen became the gurus of many of our younger composers. Boulez and Stockhausen soon followed, and the era of Darmstadt was upon us. It was soon to be the age of integral serialism and later of aleatorics, of the signal generator and the tape recorder. Yet first-class music continued to be written here, not only by the composers I have described above, but also by their followers and successors. Some continued on their own paths, independent of international trends; others, as time passed, seemed to compose less and less.

But whatever happened to individual composers, what was missing was the sense of a distinctly American music, of distinctly American developments in composition. Indeed, by the time the New York intellectuals clustered around *Partisan Review* rediscovered America in 1952 (in the famous symposium, "Our Country and Our Culture"), American music speaking of and to our own situation was gone, and with it the atmosphere of hope

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which had marked earlier decades.

Is such a collective atmosphere indeed necessary for music-making? Can great music not be produced by socially isolated artists writing out of the experience of their isolation? There can be no ready answer to this question: individuals can individually do just about anything. But artistic movements, broad trends informing and informed by a whole society, do seem to be deeply related to social optimism—even when such optimism, as in 19th-century Germany, may be less than solidly based.

A warning, however, is in order here. Because such positive social attitudes may be vital to the creation of art does not mean that they —or the art itself—can be elicited by the conscious actions of those who hold the reins of politics and society. Above all, optimism, like happiness, can never be the planned result of governmental fiat or bureaucratic direction. No lasting art issued from the exhortations to joy of Hitler and Goebbels; Stalin's policy of Socialist Realism resulted not in the enlivening of music but in the persecution of musicians. Any similar attempt in our vegetarian American context would bring about something vastly more benign, but equally lifeless.

SINCE I began with George Steiner, it would not be fair to end without attempting to answer his strictures about American music. Are any of the composers I have discussed here, from Moore to Schuman, the equal of the European names he cites?

At this moment in the history of musical taste, the reputations of such as Schoenberg and Bartók plainly stand by themselves. The problem, however, is that if we persist in judging all musical activity as Steiner does, by the received standards of the masterpiece and the immortal *oeuvre*, we will forever remain what he has accused us of being—conservators of someone else's far greater past. Such a judgment might be fair and even constructive if elsewhere in the world there were at this time vibrant musical health and glorious creative activity. But the great musical cultures of Europe seem no better off—except, of course, for their history—than do we.

Whatever value Europe may have had for us as a model in the past, it does not seem to be a viable model today. If we are to revivify our musical life, it is to our own past that we must look for both inspiration and confidence. What I have tried to suggest is that we do indeed possess a musical past of which we can be proud. How we will use that pride is a matter of creative invention, not of imitation. It is for composers to provide the invention; perhaps it is for society to provide the context.

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Books in Review

The Christmas Bombing

THE PRESTIGE PRESS AND THE CHRISTMAS BOMBING, 1972. By MARTIN F. HERZ. Assisted by LESLIE REIDER. *Ethics and Public Policy Center. 103 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by CHARLES HORNER

IN EARLY October 1972, the United States and North Vietnam seemed on the verge of an agreement to end the Vietnam war. Hanoi had retreated from its longstanding demand that the United States participate in the overthrow of the South Vietnamese government as its price for the return of American prisoners of war and a general cease-fire. In late October Henry Kissinger, the principal American negotiator, traveled to Saigon to gain South Vietnam's assent to the imminent arrangements. But the South Vietnamese had their objections, and, within three days after Kissinger's arrival in Saigon, the North Vietnamese released the text of what had been agreed to thus far. The publication of the text seemed designed to generate public pressure on the United States to sign, with the additional hope that a Washington-Saigon rupture would make Hanoi's future ambitions in the south easier to achieve.

This led to a series of events now more than eight years old but well remembered nonetheless. On October 26, 1972, Kissinger stated, "We believe peace is at hand," but he pointed out that a final agreement had not been reached. When negotiations resumed after President Nixon's overwhelming defeat of George McGovern in the November election, Kissinger discovered that the North Vietnamese now sought major revisions of the earlier agreement. In response, President Nixon ordered renewed bombing in the Hanoi-Haiphong area on December 14. The campaign was expanded on December 18 and continued for eleven days. Negotiations resumed on January 8, 1973, and were concluded four days later. On January 27, 1973, the cease-fire went into effect.

Ordinarily, historians would examine these events as a case study of the relationship between diplomacy and coercion. Martin Herz, a retired career foreign-service officer who has served as a U.S. ambassador, is himself a scholar and currently a university professor. Yet for significant and obvious reasons, he is obliged to approach the Christmas bombing as an event in American political and cultural history. The episode has not yet been rescued from today's demonology, nor, if the revival of the issue during the recent confirmation hearings of Secretary of State Alexander Haig is any indication, is it likely to be soon.

The research of Ambassador Herz and his associate Leslie Reider provides a data base for what many sensed at the time: the Christmas bombing was relentlessly criticized by the prestige press—by which Herz and Reider mean the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and CBS. Their analysis of the news reports finds that in them the U.S. was assigned greater blame for the breakdown of the negotiations than was Hanoi and that negative reactions from elsewhere around the world were given assiduous coverage. As for domestic reactions, we learn, for example, that CBS gave six times as much coverage to critical comment as it did to favorable comment, while, in the *Times*, the ratio was nineteen to one and, in the *Post*, twenty-five to one. (We know from Peter Braestrup's 1977 book, *Big Story*, that such "news" emphasis had been the rule. Braestrup's analysis of the media treatment of the 1968 Tet offensive shows that the pattern was well in place years before.)

There is nothing mysterious about these lopsided proportions, or about the concerted effort of these news organizations to portray the United States role in the worst possible light. A sampling of relevant editorial comment provides the link. The *Times* accused President Nixon of "disregard of humanitarian principles," saying that "the United States itself is in danger of being reduced to . . . stone-age barbarism." The bombing, it said, was "terrorism on an unprecedented scale." The *Times*'s columns of opinion were rife with not very subliminal references to Nazism. Anthony Lewis called the bombing "a policy that many must know history will judge a crime against humanity." Tom Wicker wrote, "It is we who have loosed the holocaust." A Washington *Post* editorial was entitled "Terror Bombing in the Name of Peace."

And so it went. News stories stressed civilian damage, suggesting that the air attacks were somehow a replay of the firebombing of Dresden. Since some 20,000 tons of bombs were dropped, it was also possible to invoke Hiroshima, for the first atomic bomb had an explosive force equivalent to only 14,000 tons of TNT. When, in March and April of 1973, it became known that civilian damage had been grossly overstated, that aerial photographs and first-hand accounts had refuted the accusation of "carpet bombing" against civilian areas, the information was tucked away. Nor did the editorialists previously cited acknowledge that they had been wrong in their allegations. And, because the prestige press had long been in favor of settling the war on practically any of Hanoi's terms, the argument that President Nixon's action had been instrumental in securing a better chance for South Vietnam's survival did not seem worth examining.

In retrospect, it is obvious that North Vietnam had come to enjoy

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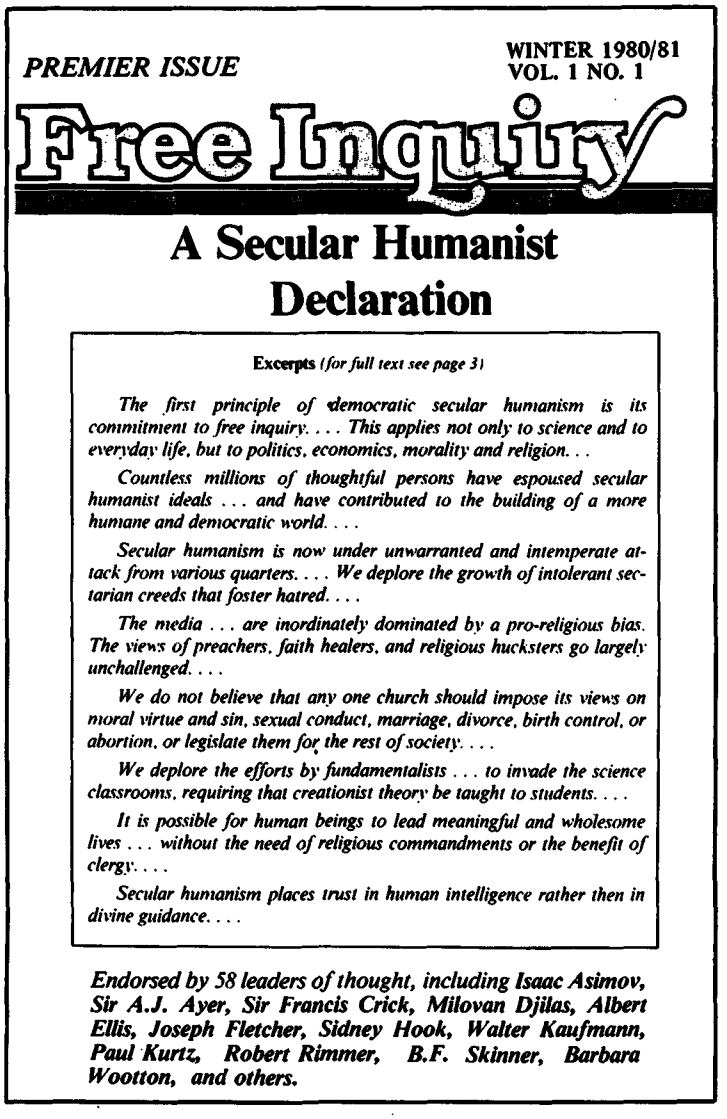

PREMIER ISSUE

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Free Inquiry

A Secular Humanist Declaration

Excerpts *(for full text see page 3)*

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moral immunity. The Hanoi regime had become an innocent, a victim, not to be called to account for either its ambitions or its methods. It is still a privileged sanctuary today. In his confirmation hearings, for example, Secretary Haig was asked by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to discuss his role in the Christmas bombing in the context of an "abuse of power" by the American government. The relevant context did not seem to include North Vietnam's violation of every provision of the 1973 peace agreement, or its crushing of South Vietnam with Soviet-made tanks in 1975, or its invasion of Cambodia, its wholesale expulsion of civilians into the sea, or any of the rest of the "liberation" process.

The contrast has gone unnoticed between the questioning of Haig and the proceeding which accompanied Cyrus Vance's nomination as Secretary of State in 1977. Vance had been a Deputy Secretary of Defense for Lyndon Johnson, but in his confirmation hearings not much attention was paid to the role of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations in *starting* the war in Vietnam. It was the role of the Nixon administration in ending it which needed "investigation."

OF COURSE, what is ethical in national policy may not always be wise, and retroactive claims of guilt and innocence are difficult to establish. Perhaps, though, the past can be made a bit more intelligible by reference to the present. As we know, for 444 days, 52 Americans were held prisoner by the government of Iran. Their treatment by their captors has occasioned a national outcry, and their return a national celebration. President Carter, who once called the Vietnam war an instance of America's "intellectual and moral poverty," heard accounts from the 52 Americans and later called the Iranians "animals." There are calls for revenge and urgings that the U.S. repudiate the agreement with Iran which secured the Americans' release.

Anyone who is outraged by Iranian behavior ought to read accounts of the conditions endured by American prisoners in North Vietnam—and not by 52 for fourteen months, but by hundreds for years. Taken together with the experience of the crew of the *Pueblo* inside North Korea, they provide an education in what sadistic and loathsome brutality really means.

For all of our newfound, and healthy, capacity for national anger, we seem unable to get angry with the North Vietnamese even in retrospect. At Christmastime 1972, while the North Vietnamese were going about their customary sordid business, there were indeed B-52 raids in the Hanoi area. The commander of each American bomber was ordered, under threat of court-martial, not to deviate from his prearranged flight plan, even for the purpose of evading enemy anti-aircraft missiles. There were, in fact, sound tactical reasons behind an order of this kind but it was also given to reduce the chances of civilian casualties. The contrast between what the North Vietnamese were doing on the ground and what the Americans were doing high above it could, if anyone bothered to understand, lead to a sensible national perspective on Vietnam in general and the Christmas bombing in particular. But this has yet to happen.

One People?

THE JEW IN THE MODERN WORLD: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY. Edited by PAUL R. MENDES-FLOHR and JEHUDA REINHARZ. *Oxford University Press. 556 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by DAVID VITAL

THERE are at least two good reasons for extracting this book from the great pile of new college textbooks that accumulates each year. One stems from the trend in higher education which it exemplifies and which it is intended to serve. The other concerns its particular subject: the history of the Jews in the modern period.

The trend in question is the enormous expansion in Jewish studies which is evident throughout the university world of the United States and to a lesser degree Canada and Western Europe. A scant generation ago, the history, language, and culture of the Jews were either absent from the curricula of reputable universities in the West or fitted awkwardly to the concerns of Christian theologians and specialists in Semitics or the ancient world. Here and there an exception could be discerned, but by and large the burden of the systematic, academic study of Jewry and Judaism fell to specialist, Jewish institutions. Today, by contrast, centers, institutes, chairs, programs, and courses multiply. The quantitative proportions of Jewish studies in the Western world are now those of an industry—and that is even without reference to the scholarship and teaching in Israel.

The book under review, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, published under a distinguished academic imprint, serves very well as a case in point. Its editors, one from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the other from the University of Michigan, have produced a carefully planned, nicely printed, and entirely serious attempt to present something of the diversity of Jewish life in modern times and, at the same time, reduce it to some sort of order—the sort of order that is manifestly necessary if there is to be a basis for good university teaching. In its class, a small class still, it is certainly the best of its kind.

Professors Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz begin in the 17th century with Menasseh Ben Israel's petition to Oliver Cromwell in which are argued the benefits that would accrue to England if the Jews were allowed to settle in it once more—a historical incident that was as good a "Harbinger of Political and Economic Change" in Jewry (to use the editors' title for their first section) as any. The subsequent ten sections, each containing between a dozen and three dozen documents, are equally reasonable categories in themselves: "Harbingers of Cultural and Ideological Change"; "The Process of Political Emancipation in Western Europe";

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"Emerging Patterns of Religious Adjustment"; "The Science of Judaism"; "Jewish Identity Challenged and Redefined"; "Political and Racial Anti-Semitism"; "The Russian Experience"; "The American Experience"; "Zionism"; and "The Holocaust." The introductory pages are clear and sound. There are a few errors, inevitable in so large and complex a work (over 550 pages in double columns), but they are all trivial. There is a very useful demographic appendix. And there is, as intended, historiographical order. Plainly, the young student is in good hands.

BUT what of the direction in which he is set? What is the *nature* of the order which the editors have imposed upon the exceptionally difficult matter with which they have had to cope? What is the conception of the history of the Jews in modern times that has informed them?

The short answer is that to some extent the editors skirt the problem by putting the emphasis, as the book's title suggests, on the *modernization* of Jewry; on its coming to terms, for good or ill, with the modern world, or its failure to do so; on the impact of modern external forces upon the Jews; and, finally, on the Jews' own impact on the external world surrounding them. This is a legitimate view, but not, as the editors would surely be the first to concede, the only one. And it carries with it certain dangers. For it has led them to a very heavy emphasis on German Jewry and to a corresponding lack of attention, comparatively speaking, to other communities.

Thus the problem of "identity" is presented in *The Jew in the Modern World* mainly in terms formulated by Jews of Germany and the German cultural sphere. Political and racial anti-Semitism too is discussed almost entirely in terms of Germany (with some references to France). Even the Holocaust is seen primarily in terms of the fate of the German-Jewish community and of events within Germany—Germany proper, that is to say, as distinct from German-occupied territory. And so on. The internal evolution and external relations of the vastly greater mass of Jews in Eastern Europe are then dealt with separately and fairly briefly, chiefly under the heading, "The Russian Experience."

Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz admit to "what might seem to be an inordinate emphasis on German and Central European Jewish experience," but they argue (correctly) that the "transformations in traditional Jewish life occurred in a comprehensive way among the Jews of the Germanic lands first and in a particularly intense manner." That there is something to be said for the principle of order they have chosen is plain. But might it not have serious competitors?

THE central question in Jewish historiography has always been the question of unity. What, in the case of the Jews, can replace the territorial base and the political structure that in the final analysis provide the core, the centripetal force, that keeps other national histories from flying apart into social, cultural, regional, economic, and socio-ethnic pieces? The classic answer, of course, has been religion. The first great attempt at a comprehensive history of the Jewish *people*, that of Heinrich Graetz in the 19th century, boiled down to an intellectual—or, more strictly, religious—history of the Jews, or, more strictly still, a history of the Jewish "idea," of Judaism. And the evidence that this approach is still alive is all around us. Following, perhaps unconsciously, in Graetz's footsteps, the editors of the new *Encyclopaedia Britannica* provide no article or entry under "the Jews" or the "Jewish People," but present their account of how the affairs of the Jews evolved over some three thousand years under the ostensibly plain but profoundly tendentious rubric, "Judaism." At their hands, as at the hands of many others, Jewry emerges as a community (or network of communities) of faith rather than one founded on common social and political interests, and—for some purposes, at least—action.

To conceive of the Jews as first and foremost a community of faith is fair as a *preliminary* approach.

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But it remains true that, for the entire period of the Diaspora, where the Jews differed from most other sects, even those defining themselves in both religious-cultural and ethnic terms, was precisely in the enormous importance they attached to their political past and, if much more vaguely, to the political future that still awaited them. Even if the Jews were in some sense only a nation-in-waiting, it was never entirely unreasonable to class them with the nations of the world.

The change that overtook Western European Jewry in modern times lay precisely in the fading belief in such an eventual political-territorial future; and with it, by implication, a fading of the cyclical view of Jewish history: the norm became not cycles of exile followed by return, but progress through varying conditions culminating in one whose essential attributes would be spiritual and moral in the highest degree, participation in which would be entirely free and voluntary. Jewry, in such terms, would indeed be a community of faith of the like-minded—if it was to be a community at all. Of common authority and common interest there would be none except the spiritual. In brief, in the West, the concept of Jewish nationhood, or peoplehood, began to drop away rapidly in modern times and where and when it was restored and refreshed it was almost entirely through the agency of forces external to Jewry and intensely hostile to it.

But this type or pattern of modernization, with its concomitant dissolution of the national idea, was characteristic only of certain parts of Jewry. The small communities of Western Europe were powerfully affected by it; the large communities of Eastern Europe and the Islamic lands were only moderately affected if at all. And for Jewry as a whole, the emergence of more than one pattern of accommodation to changing times was decisively—and perhaps fatally—divisive. Over and above the many other differences and contradictions which rendered it so problematical a social category, Jewry, henceforth, was divided into a class of Jews who retained their eye for common, overarching Jewish interests and purposes and a class of those who did not.

This collapse of the ideological unity of the Jews was matched by growing social and political differentiation. Among European Jewry there would henceforth be, on the one hand, a large, fairly cohesive, Yiddish-speaking mass in Eastern Europe—in effect (and in law) one of the constituent national groups of the region, a nation in all but the strict political-constitutive sense of the term and culturally continuous with Jewry (and Judaism) before the secularist flood; and, on the other hand, in Central and Western Europe, a variety of ill-connected communities of varying languages, internal regimes, social attributes, and political outlooks who were moving away from each other rapidly and away too from what had always lain at the heart of the tradition, the unity of the Jewish people.

The division may be seen to have run deeper still. Paradoxically, the rise of modern political consciousness within East European Jewry, typified by the emergence of the Zionist movement and the Bund, and by the pressure after World War I for minority rights, marked a striking departure from the quietism and self-abnegation that had been the salient features of Diaspora practice heretofore, while the distinctly quietistic and self-effacing behavior of the communities to the West (and the correspondingly minute proportion of their number adhering to Zionism) was in its way well within the original tradition. Who then were the true moderns? Not, surely, the Westerners, at least in this respect.

The paradox was never resolved. How matters might have turned out had the Jews retained their autonomous social and cultural institutions, along with a measure of shadowy political autonomy, none can tell. The destruction of Eastern European Jewry swept away that line of development entirely, even as a possibility. The Poles were spared the need to consider whether they should reverse themselves on the issue of minority rights (for Ukrainians and others, as well as for Jews), while the Russian Bolsheviks, in tragic contradiction, did reverse themselves on the issue of the perpetuation of Jewry as a distinct cultural (as opposed to biological) category. In the event, the sole remaining heirs to the Jewish separatist tendency were the Orthodox on the one hand and the Zionists on the other—both, after 1945, largely outside Europe.

Indeed, the Zionists, faithful to the internal logic of their enterprise, duly pushed matters further still. By simultaneously restoring politics to part of Jewry and creating a central and inescapable focus of concern for all of it, they caused, in their way, a greater departure from traditional Jewish practice and thinking in public affairs than there had been since the time of the ancient rabbis. Moreover, they produced a fissure within Jewry which to this day *individuals* can cross at will, but which is so sharp and deep so far as whole collectivities are concerned as to fracture Jewry more visibly still into two classes, if not two peoples. One consists of a nation in all familiar senses of the term, including the formal-political. The other consists of a congeries of communities and private associations whose ties with one another (and with the Israelis) and whose capacity and will for common action remain problematic in the highest degree.

One consequence of these events and developments is that the historian of the Jews in modern times must now address himself much more seriously than had been customary to the questions of whether and to what extent the Jews really constitute a single people; and if so, which part of them, which communities, which class or sub-class, are properly his central concern.

The answers are still obscure. No single set is likely to be easily or commonly accepted. But this much may be said—that the case for judging Eastern, rather than Western, European Jewry to be the major topic in the history of modern Jewry is a powerful one. This is certainly true for the crucial period of the one hundred years ending in World War II, and even, by extension, for our own times. The

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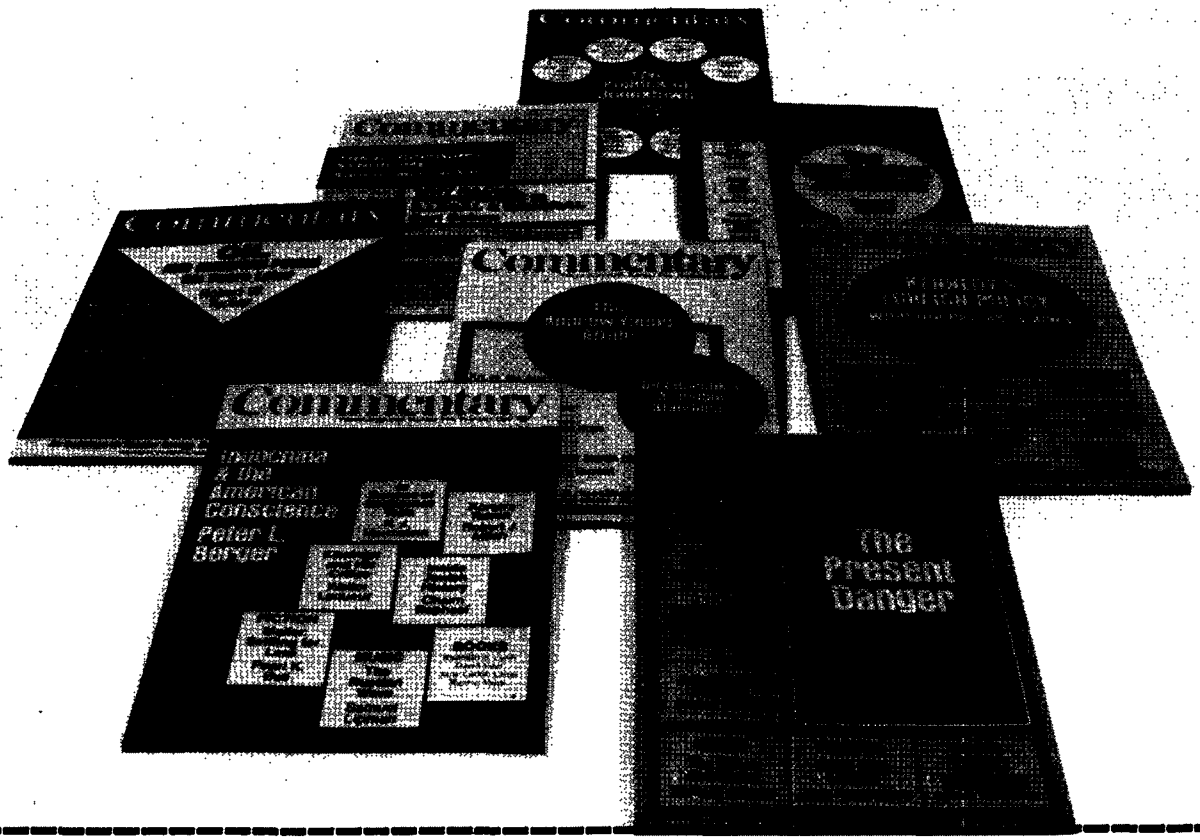

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North American wing of Jewry is in many of its features an offshoot of the East European, and so is the Israeli wing (partly so by descent, almost wholly so in essential political origins). So too is contemporary Orthodoxy, in virtually all its dominant surviving trends and groups. Finally, the destruction of European Jewry at the hands of Germany and the cultural asphyxiation of Russian Jewry at the hands of the Soviet Union—the effect of which two amputations has been fatally to change the structure and quality of the Jewish people and to alter it psychically in ways which we can still only dimly perceive—are in the first place the ruin, again, of *Eastern* European Jewry.

To put the matter very simply, until the 1940's the paradigmatic "Jew in the Modern World" spoke Yiddish and was to be found East of the German cultural realm and well away from the English-, French-, or Spanish-speaking worlds. If there is no equivalent single paradigmatic Jew today it is partly because there are two, one speaking English, the other Hebrew, and partly because the two are no more than the one's descendants and heirs.

Political Mania

FIRE IN THE MINDS OF MEN: ORIGINS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FAITH. By JAMES H. BILLINGTON. *Basic Books. 677 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by PETER SHAW

REVOLUTION and its political opposite, reaction, are usually approached by scholars in quite different ways. Where the revolutionary tradition tends to elicit analysis in terms of political ideas, reaction is often taken to be a problem of psychology, the response to change of frightened and often paranoid elites.

In *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, Richard Hofstadter explored the psychology of far Right movements in American history. But even as his book was being published in 1965, the emotional politics he described was migrating to the revolutionary Left. James Billington, then just beginning his research on revolution, appears to have been influenced by this development. For in *Fire in the Minds of Men* he shows that, like reaction, revolution has always been at least as much a matter of impulse and emotion as of a considered politics.

Billington is hardly alone in being influenced by the 1960's. That period taught the key significance of symbolism, ritual, passion, the irrational, youthful high spirits, sexual styles, and avant-garde ideas in the formation of a revolutionary politics. Whatever one's point of view, one came in the 60's to appreciate the ways in which all of society may participate imaginatively in radical agitation.

Non-Marxist scholars have for some time looked for ways to account for the phenomenon of Left revolutionism, the persistence of which among intellectuals appears more and more surprising in view of the perennial brutalities and documented social and economic failures of revolutionary regimes. It is in this connection that Norman Cohn's study of medieval religious messianism, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (1957), now seems a prophetic work. In the 1970's J.L. Talmon in *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* and Guenter Lewy in *Religion and Revolution* both extended Cohn's push beyond the usual political and philosophical categories in their attempts to get at the nature of the revolutionary impulse. And now James Billington has gone a step further by interpreting revolution in terms of behavior instead of professed aims. The effect is to separate the revolutionary tradition from its past associations with both Enlightenment and "scientific" socialism.

Fire in the Minds of Men is a long and difficult work, teeming with personalities, movements, manifestos, and ideas in numerous countries from France in 1789 to Russia in 1917. Billington dazzling-

PETER SHAW *is the author of* The Character of John Adams *and* American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution, *which Harvard University Press will publish next month.*

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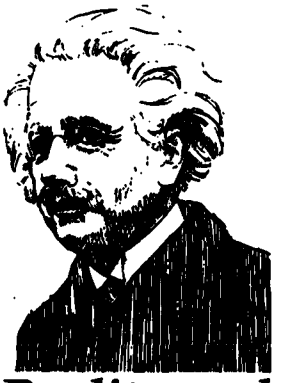

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ly invokes scholarship in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Czech, Croatian, and Polish, as he moves across Europe to South America, and very briefly to the United States. The narrative is filled with what have heretofore seemed the irrelevant arcana of revolutionary history. There are sections on the symbiosis between underground organizations and the secret police, documented instances of political conversions from revolutionary Left to extreme Right and vice versa, and illustrations of the ways in which public celebrations and music not only inspired revolutionaries, but as in the cases of Piedmont and Belgium in 1821 and 1830, sparked the riots that led on to revolution.

How this colorful material bears on the nature of the revolutionary idea is made clear by Billington's treatment of the French Revolution. He argues that occult and romantic sources were at least as decisive in that upheaval as the factors usually stressed by historians —the evolution of Enlightenment thought and the bankruptcy of the Old Regime. Not so much the philosophy of Rousseau, it develops, as German romanticism in general and in particular an underground German occult organization, the Bavarian Illuminati, laid the mental and emotional groundwork for the Revolution and its shocking excesses.

Founded in Germany in 1776, the Illuminati was a revolutionary political organization made up of secret cells based on a Jesuit model. It recruited members among the politically neutral Masons, at the same time adopting many Masonic ritual practices. While Illuminism was unsuccessful in Germany, and never reached America, it did influence the more radical leaders of the French Revolution. Thereafter, it provided the mechanism and élan for underground revolutionary organizations throughout the world.

The story of revolution as Billington tells it is a fantastic mélange of German mystical beliefs and practices gradually being adopted by the rest of Europe. In France the obscure tradition of Illuminism found its way to the Palais Royale, the public pleasure gardens of the Duc d'Orléans, who was the doomed King's cousin (and a Mason). The galleries, cafés, and bordellos of the Palais, part of which was fittingly built underground, were characterized by an iconoclastic atmosphere compounded of pornography, sex exhibitions, drugs, and utopian thought. The extremist spirit of the Palais (from which the crowd that marched on the Bastille departed) exerted a powerful influence throughout the Revolution. And afterward—after the public song and spectacle, the beheading of the king and queen, and the Terror—the Palais style remained to form the basis of modern revolutionism.

ALTHOUGH for the most part Billington refrains from drawing parallels between the period of the French Revolution and our own outburst of radicalism in the 1960's, the latter period is inescapably evoked by his discussion of such phenomena as the conflation of madness and sanity in the pornographic poetry of Saint-Just (a habitué of the Palais and eventual agent of the Terror), the Revolution's elevation of youth, its cult of primitivism, its "radical thirst for revolutionary simplification," its combination of egalitarian theory and elitist practice, and its worship of violence.

Billington traces these tendencies through virtually every revolutionary movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries, including the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, Russian anarchism, the Paris Commune, and the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. He is particularly interested in the periods *between* major uprisings, for it was then that the secretive, occult side of revolution evolved most richly. He has been accused by reviewers of failing to establish causal linkages among the various revolutions, but he does in fact trace a number of continuities. Most notable among these is the perpetuation of Illuminism's small, secret cells in later revolutionary organizations. In particular through the long career and writings of Filippo Buonarroti, a participant in the French Revolution, Billington is able directly to link occultism, mid-19th-century revolutionism, and even Marx and Engels to the tradition of Illuminism.

Yet continuities, though fascinating, are perhaps less significant than spontaneous reappearances of occultism and fanaticism. Time and again revolutionary groups adopted the Masonic triangle, the triad, or the Pythagorean prime numbers; time and again they attributed magical influence to the circle or pentagon; time and again they took one or another of these forms as organizational models. Billington relates these numerological and geometric preoccupations to "the radical search for revolutionary simplification." They also relate to the revolutionary attraction to primitivism in general, to a "primitive vision of the world as a dualistic struggle between the forces of darkness and light," and to revolutionary violence, denunciation, and terror.

BILLINGTON'S problem lies not in any failure to establish continuities of influence, but in his attempt to employ consistently the "fire" and "faith" of his title and subtitle. He is certainly right both to call attention to the ubiquity of "fire" in revolutionary rhetoric (culminating in Lenin's newspaper *Iskra*, "The Spark"), and to search out examples of revolutionary "faith." These terms, however—especially the latter—do not amount to an explanatory system.

Billington employs "faith" in shifting ways: to describe a truly religious attachment to revolution but also to indicate a simply tenacious or spirited adherence to it. In some cases he can point to behavior demonstrably adapted from organized religion, but in others he shows little more than vaguely pious attitudes at work. Thus the history of revolutionary faith ranges from the Illuminist practices derived from religion, to the "faith" that was imbibed from the French Revolution by impressionable Italian and Polish "romantic" revolutionaries, to the religious *imagery* of 19th-century Communism, to Marxism's "spiritual" aspirations, "apostolic" leaders, and blindly obedient "faithful." Finally, we learn that Proudhon com-

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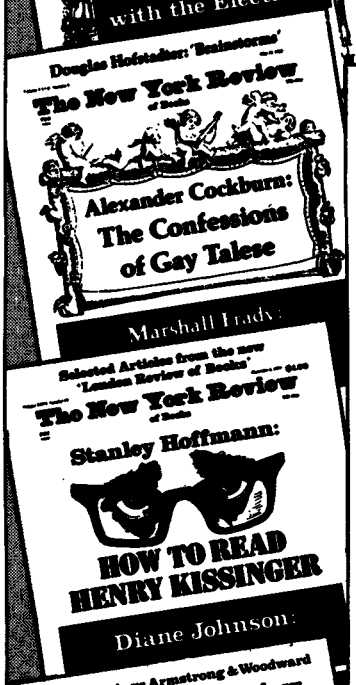
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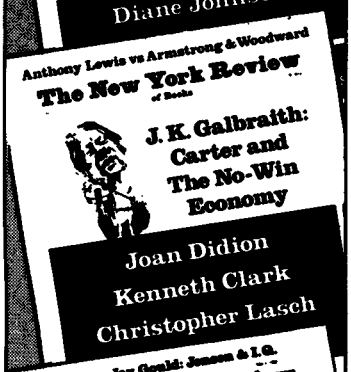
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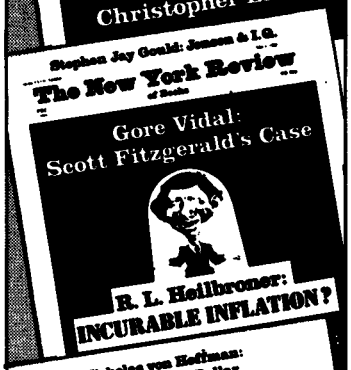

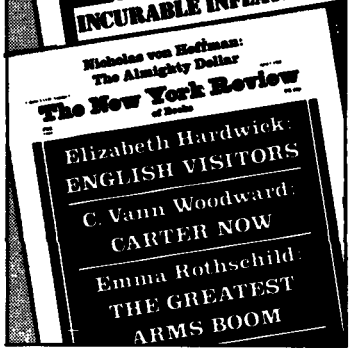
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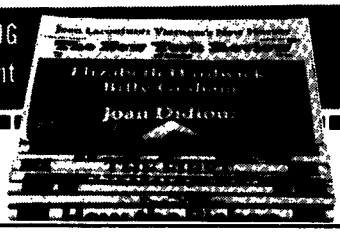

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pared the anathematizing Marx to Luther, while Plekhanov, speaking of Russian revolutionary terrorism, observed that an acquiescent intelligentsia "believed in terror as in God."

Billington earlier discussed the worship of terror in *The Icon and the Axe*, his monumental study of Russian history and culture. There he outlined the "mystical idealism" and "utopian fanaticism of the Russian revolutionary tradition," and found in the violence of the late 19th-century organization, the People's Will, "a prophetic anticipation" and actual model of Lenin's Bolshevist party. In *Fire in the Minds of Men* Billington has traced comparable expressions of violence throughout revolutionary history: violence appears in a "heroic" mode in Italy and Poland, in a "modernized," efficient form in late 19th-century France, and as a "stoic, humorless asceticism" with the Russians; eventually, modern revolution everywhere becomes "a grim and prosaic matter." Viewed in this context, Marxism appears as nothing more than a "mask" for the terrorism that it transmits from the 19th to the 20th century.

"Fanaticism" rather than faith might better have applied to this tradition of violence, while for the related phenomenon of revolutionary extremism the concept of the irrational would seem a useful guide. Billington explicitly rejects "the psychological method," calling it "a somewhat dated technique." Nevertheless, in discussing occultism and Masonry he refers to an "increasingly *manic* search for simple, geometric harmonies," and in accounting for the "not untypical" sexual deviations of certain revolutionaries, he invokes something he calls the "psycho-sexual element."

This approach might well have been extended to other forms of extreme revolutionary behavior. One finds, for example, not only sexual libertinism, but its opposite, asceticism (discussed at greater length by Bruce Mazlish in *The Revolutionary Ascetic*). The revolutionary mentality consistently demands the absolute, sweeping, violent solution, and aims always at achieving not merely a tolerable world but a perfect one. The revolutionary's greatest contempt is reserved not for his opposite, the reactionary—in fact the two extremes find one another fascinating—but for the moderate. In the French Revolution the "Mountain" on the left and the "Plain" on the right of the National Assembly set the precedent when they joined in despising the "Swamp" of moderates between them.

During the Revolution, Saint-Just wrote: "That which produces the general good is always terrible." In the 1830's the French revolutionary, Voyer d'Argenson, declared that "profound convictions are intolerant"; in the 1860's the Russian Peter Zaichnevsky wrote, "A revolution . . . must change everything down to the very roots . . . we know that rivers of blood will flow and that perhaps even innocent victims will perish." Francois Noël Babeuf, who conspired to seize power in 1795 in order further to radicalize the Revolution, prayed: "May everything return to chaos, and out of chaos may there emerge a new and regenerated world."

By emphasizing the centrality of sentiments like these, Billington has redrawn the picture of revolution. Its underside, heretofore neglected, now appears as its essence. The persistence of the revolutionary faith still remains to be accounted for—perhaps by an explanatory concept on the order of Hofstadter's "paranoid style." But no discussion of revolution in the future can afford to neglect the massive documentation of violence and fanaticism which Billington has presented.

Cynic and Moralist

THE LETTERS OF EVELYN WAUGH. Edited by MARK AMORY. *Ticknor & Fields. 664 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by GEORGE LANE

THERE can be little doubt that the least trendy literary talent of our century was the British novelist Evelyn Arthur St. John Waugh (1903-1966). The son of a middle-class Victorian publisher who read Dickens aloud to his children, Waugh had a writing career that spanned four decades and was bounded on either end by crushing disillusionment: betrayal by his first wife in 1929 while he was writing his novel of the "bright young people," *Vile Bodies*, and betrayal by his adopted Church after the Vatican Council of 1962-64.

Following the precepts of the pre-Johannine Catholicism he had embraced in the 1920's, Waugh equated most forms of political liberalism and socialism with the Marxist heresy, and carried on a sometimes splendid, sometimes petty rear-guard action against intrusions of the "century of the common man." Though his friends included politicians of every stamp, Tory and socialist, he gagged on the political process itself, with its endless compromises and accommodations, and never voted in a parliamentary election ("I do not aspire to advise my Sovereign on her choice of servants"). In his trilogy of the adventures of a "dim" co-religionist in World War II, *Sword of Honour*, he observes that no good comes from public causes, "only from private causes of the soul."

The usual view of Waugh, of course, is that he was a thundering snob, clawing and kicking his way up the social ladder and showering drunken abuse on those he could afford to insult—those who were not Cavendishes, Pakenhams, or Ponsonbys—and this view dominated much of the critical comment that greeted publication of his diaries eight years ago. In keeping with the changed temper of the times, this new selection of his letters by Mark Amory has been hailed with something like nostalgic affection—though for the most part it is Waugh's manner that is praised by reviewers hankering after lovable literary eccentrics, while his ideas are conveniently overlooked. Still, the snob issue will not go away in the century of the common man.

It is worth remembering that Waugh was not pretending to belong to a social stratum; he did belong to it. He went to school with

GEORGE LANE, *a new contributor, teaches English literature at Lasell Junior College in Massachusetts.*

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aristocrats, caroused with them at Oxford, served with them in exclusive regiments, married the granddaughter of an earl (a cousin of his first wife), and lived out his years of fame in the role of a country squire, though one dependent on astute literary agents and the public's taste for anarchic comedy. Waugh himself met the snob issue head on by insisting the world had been a saner and stabler place in the 19th century when each class emulated the one above it. While he could be defensive about it to old friends, the pose was also a convenient "put-on" for gullible outsiders, including literary groupies and critics whose work he did not admire.

IF WAUGH ever put his worst foot forward in his work it was in his wartime novel, *Brideshead Revisited*, where his aristophilia collides with his first fictional attempt to get serious about religion. The purple paragraphs (later rewritten) in praise of recusant Catholicism in the ancien régime brought down on him the fury of previously friendly critics like Edmund Wilson, who denounced the novel as a Catholic tract, and the ridicule of others like Sean O'Faolain and Conor Cruise O'Brien ("Donat O'Donnell") who condemned him for romanticizing English Catholicism as a grace peculiar to a few upper-class families.

Among several ironies in Waugh's life were his choice of modern history as his field at Oxford and his initially buoyant patriotism after the Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939, when for some 22 months he could justify the war as a gentleman's crusade against "the modern age in arms." The *noblesse oblige* view went sour with Hitler's invasion of Russia and the shift of the Soviets to the Allied side. "I was staying with him in Naples in 1944," he writes in 1963 of the then-Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, "when he got the news that Churchill & Roosevelt had consented to the destruction of (Catholic) Lithuania. He showed obvious satisfaction saying: 'Well, that's one problem the less.' I think he has grown a carapace of cynicism to protect a tender conscience.

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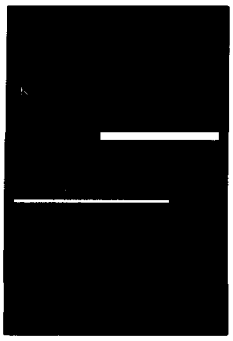

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Born in 1899, W. H. Hutt graduated from the London School of Economics and based his academic career at the University of Cape Town. He is presently Distinguished Visiting Professor of Economics at the University of Dallas.
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Perhaps he may find his soul in retirement." Waugh's concern for Lithuania and the Prime Minister's soul is balanced by his horror, in the same letter, at Macmillan's "gravest crimes" as chancellor of Oxford University: demolishing a posh hotel to put up a Woolworth's and appointing Hugh Trevor-Roper, whom Waugh saw as a Catholic-baiter, as Regius Professor.

THE war years saw a metamorphosis of the protagonist in Waugh's novels, from the resilient bounder who comes out ahead—Basil Seal of *Black Mischief* and *Put Out More Flags*—to the dim prig as victim—Charles Ryder of *Brideshead* and Guy Crouchback of the *Sword of Honour* series. Both of these types, the bounder and the prig, partake of the growing *accidie* that afflicted their creator himself in the 1950's and 1960's, his sense that he "had been born in sunlight and lived to see night fall."

It is significant that Waugh should have discovered affinities of temperament with Swift. A satirist is in the end a moralist, and Waugh's fierce indignation is to a considerable extent his own carapace of cynicism, his defense against the Victorian sentimentality of his father's age which he both dreaded and inherited, and which he exposed so tellingly in his single greatest novel, *A Handful of Dust*.

Caustic and petulant as he was, Waugh was also fortunate in his friends. They were certainly a diverse lot: Cyril Connolly, whom he teased without respite, Graham Greene, Anthony Powell, Ronald Knox, Maurice Bowra, Alfred Duggan, John Betjeman, and the bumptious prototype of his cad-heroes, Randolph Churchill. He was a first-rate entertainer in private as in public, as the comic hyperbole of the letters shows—especially the letters to his children. Sometimes the joke went on too long, as in his famous insistence that Marshal Tito was not only a woman but a lesbian ("Her face is rather pretty but the legs are *very* thick"), but like many artists with a passion for order he showed extraordinary zest in depicting scenes of disarray and chaos. Up to the very last months, life amused him as much as it nettled him, and he was determined to share his amusement with his friends.

Where Waugh shines most luminously in Mark Amory's collection is in the letters to the women who were his most constant pen-pals. To his young second wife he is protective and gently jocular, even censoring out language he thinks "unsuitable" for her, but he opens out pages of gossip and ribaldry to old chums like the Lygon sisters, Mary and Dorothy, Pamela Betjeman, Lady Diana Cooper, Mrs. Ian Fleming, and Nancy Mitford. In a firm but self-effacing and unprudish letter he lectures Randolph's cousin, Clarissa Churchill, on her "apostasy" from the Catholic Church in marrying the divorced Anthony ("Jerk") Eden, recalling his prior failure to save the soul of another traveler on the primrose path, Kathleen Kennedy, daughter of the U.S. ambassador (and sister of the future President), who was killed in a plane crash while eloping for the second time.

WAUGH's patience with modern Catholicism ran out precisely when the Church entered what his son Auberon has called its "silly season" in 1964. It was not merely the theological hedging or the self-conscious ecumenism of the *aggiornamento* that riled him but the cheap gimmickry that characterized Vatican II's appeasement of the 20th century. In language, as in architecture and etiquette, order and beauty were all to Waugh; he railed at the "selective return" to practices of the early Church and at the atrocious translations of Scripture being inflicted on the faithful in the name of a modernism he clearly saw as fraudulent.

"For me Christianity begins with the Counter-Reformation," Waugh wrote from Jerusalem in 1935—perhaps the most revealing comment in the *Letters*. Near the end of his life he was writing to prelates to find loopholes in his obligation to attend the "new" mass, and fuming that "in a happier age [Hans] Küng would have been burned at the stake." He even fantasized that his son-in-law might be persuaded to assassinate Pope Paul in New York.

On Easter Sunday, 1966, weary of the silly season and begloomed by premature old age and the loss of old friends, he had the consolation of hearing the old mass said in the old way, in Latin, and then fell dead in his house in Somerset. Randolph Churchill, serving with him in the war, had once exploded at some infuriating quibble of Waugh's by bellowing that it was always the avowedly religious people who were the worst shits. Waugh fixed him with his round blue eyes and asked quietly, "My dear Randolph, have you ever thought what I should be like if I *weren't*?"

AMORY's selection is annotated enough to suit the crustiest Waughian, given the necessity to excise much repetition in the glum final decade, and he has on the whole been generous to his subject, a classic English eccentric and a master of English prose style whose work deserves reconsideration as we continue to slide (linguistically and otherwise) down the tube.

The Woes of Academe

GROUP MEMORY: A GUIDE TO COLLEGE AND STUDENT SURVIVAL IN THE 1980's. By ALSTON CHASE. *Atlantic Monthly Press. 330 pp. $12.95.*

EDUCATION AND THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL. By STEVEN M. CAHN. *Nelson-Hall. 111 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by CHESTER E. FINN, JR.

ANYONE who spent part of the late 60's or early 70's on an American college campus, but has not been back since, may well wonder if the institutional decay so visible then was ever arrested. One reads from time to time of a "new seriousness" on the part of contemporary students, of libraries full of ardent undergraduates cramming themselves with the information they are told they will need to get

CHESTER E. FINN, JR. *is the author of several books on education, including* Education and the Presidency *and* Scholars, Dollars, and Bureaucrats.

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the grades that will give them a fighting chance for admission to professional school. One reads, too, of the occasional university that sets out to replace its smorgasbord of a curriculum with a *table d'hôte* of required "core" courses. And aside from the predictable fascination with the quixotic candidacy of John Anderson, one sees little evidence of political activity, much less radical activism, on the contemporary campus. Can it really be that the desire to get into law school has replaced the impulse to stop the war, detain the dean, and sell all university stockholdings in nations not governed by leftist despots? What exactly is going on?

ALSTON CHASE offers more by way of explanation than reassurance. He is alarmed by current trends in American higher education, not because he preferred the radicalism of a decade ago but because he finds that the proper function of the university is being left ever farther behind. A former professor of philosophy at Macalester, Ohio State, and Princeton, Chase "left all that" four years ago and fled to Montana, where he now ranches, teaches wilderness skills, and guides people on trips through Yellowstone Park.

His considerable distance from the campus has helped Chase produce an insightful and constructive analysis of what has gone wrong with the academy and how it might —but probably will not—be set right. Alas, his shrewd observations are buried in the nooks and crannies of a woefully constructed book, one that combines autobiography with fiction, history with futurology, analysis with polemic, and trenchant criticism of the university with avuncular advice to students on how to get through it all in spite of the shortcomings.

Chase bluntly assigns primary responsibility for past and present difficulties to the academy itself. External forces have played a role, to be sure, but only because universities responded badly, allowing themselves to be lured by government into overspecialization, curricular proliferation, and institutional dependency, and by the weakening student market into a

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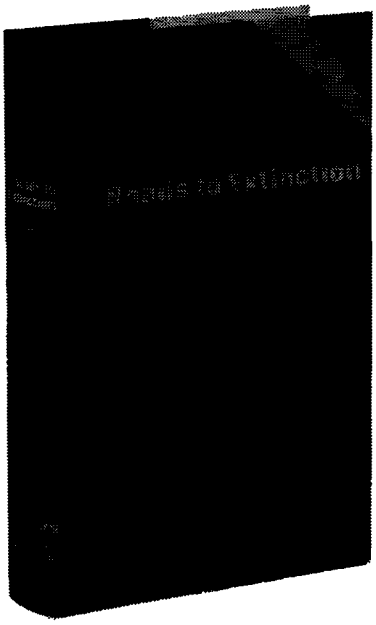

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merchandiser's willingness to sell whatever the consumer will buy.

There has been deep erosion of the three ideas which, in Chase's view, define the nature of the university: unity, in the sense that the universe can be made intelligible and knowledge integrated "by the study of a central residue of inherited insight to which everything else could be related"; continuity, or the preservation of cultural perspective (and the "group memory" of the title) by insuring that the university changes more slowly than the society around it; and values, the search for and teaching of intellectual, moral, and aesthetic truth. "These three ideas," Chase argues, "not only traditionally lie at the heart of the liberal arts, but constitute the glue that holds a community together." Instead of cherishing them, the modern university has subverted them, replacing unity with a bewildering array of specialties and options; continuity with a dizzying, almost self-propelled ardor for change; and values with a headlong dash into relativism, hedonism, and anomie.

The processes of subversion are consistent with what Chase terms the new academic ideology, one that has "created, on campus, an atmosphere hostile to learning and living." Grounded in logical positivism, it is one in which all ideas have equal value and in which morality, having no objective verifiability, has no value at all except for describing individual emotional conditions.

This ideology—itself a product of what David Riesman and Christopher Jencks have termed the "academic revolution" of the 1950's—was admirably suited to the campus upheavals of the Vietnam era. It lent itself to new arrangements for participatory governance, to the abolition of course requirements and grades, and to the supplanting of "truth" by "commitment" as the primary goal. "The close-knit community of scholars," Chase relates, "dissolved into a Babel of conflicting groups, each using the campus as an arena in which to pursue its interests and ideas."

What is to be done? The prescription Chase offers is less invigorating than his diagnosis, although it seems sound enough: greater differentiation among campuses, hence more true diversity within academe; reconstruction of the liberal arts around a core of prescribed courses; judicious pruning of diversionary options and costly frills; a diminished role for government, especially federal; the rebuilding of university-governing mechanisms that are both collegial and respectful of authority; a marked elevation of academic standards; and a resumption of institutional responsibility for the quality of student life (and behavior) on campus.

CHASE has a willing ally in Steven M. Cahn, a fellow philosopher and refugee from academe. Formerly chairman of the department at the University of Vermont, he now works for the Rockefeller Foundation. *Education and the Democratic Ideal* is a brief but eloquent plea for an educated citizenry as the surest means to preserve an effective democratic system of politics and governance. "If the public cannot distinguish reason from demagogy, integrity from duplicity, wisdom from folly, then all is lost." And if demagogy is on many lips and reason on few, if folly is epidemic and wisdom scarce, we have only our educations to blame—or so Cahn would seem to suggest. Surfeited with "relevance," awash in trivia, untutored in fundamental skills, lacking any shared body of common knowledge, uncertain that there is anything so worth knowing that everyone should learn it, expert in the non-judgmental language of cultural and political relativism, but lacking both the confidence and the stable values to formulate thoughtful criticism, unchallenged by high intellectual standards, we have no sustained capacity to evaluate our leaders and demand better.

Only an educator could believe so strongly in the power of education to cure all these related maladies. Fortunately, Cahn's vision of what the university can and should

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become is appealing in its own right. His specific criticisms of the contemporary university are mostly implicit, and his reforms have a narrower focus than those of Alston Chase. Cahn is chiefly interested in the content of the curriculum and in the pedagogical methods by which it is conveyed. He retains the quaint notion that professors generally know more than students and are the proper judge of what students ought to learn.

His academic menu is certainly nutritious. Cahn believes that a liberally educated person will know how to "read, write, and speak effectively"; will understand "public issues," the "fundamental concepts and techniques of mathematics," and the "methods of inquiry" employed in science and in history; will have acquired "sensitivity to aesthetic experience," competency in a foreign language, and a "knowledge of human values."

This means students must study with professors who take teaching seriously, who hold them to high standards of intellectual performance, and who demand evidence of learning. The faculty will have to work exceedingly hard to do all that Cahn believes it should do, assuming responsibility for the entire academic side of the university, weeding out of its own ranks lazy or inept individuals, and teaching and counseling on what seems to be an around-the-clock basis.

No more than a handful of the 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States come close to the vision of either author, and it is unlikely that many more will. Few professors or students want to work that hard. Sensible but frustrated individuals like Chase and Kahn depart for other pursuits. Few deans, presidents, or trustees are risk-takers. Nor is it a simple matter to focus the requisite attention on the inner life of the university when so much energy must be invested in responding to outside constituencies, interest groups, funding sources, and government regulators. But without goals there can be no progress at all, and the goals set for the university by these two sober, erudite, and wise participant-observers are sound ones, indeed.

Professional Liberal

INDEPENDENT JOURNEY: THE LIFE OF WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS. By JAMES F. SIMON. *Harper & Row. 503 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by HERMAN BELZ

MANY historians of the Supreme Court in the pre-New Deal era emphasized the relationship between economic interests and legal principles. Constitutional controversies, as Charles A. Beard and his progressive colleagues taught many years ago, are never resolved in a political vacuum, but rather are inextricably bound up with and usually serve to promote some sectional, class, or group interest. Yet this point has failed to find expression in conventional histories of the Court *since* the New Deal. Liberal historians had no difficulty in perceiving the property-minded motivation of the conservative Supreme Court from 1890 to 1937. But in their accounts of judicial history since the Court-packing fight of 1937, and especially during the Earl Warren period, they have by and large described the Court as an institution committed to true principles of liberty and equality, recognizing and seeking to eliminate social injustices which the political branches of the government persisted in ignoring.

After 1937 the Supreme Court created a body of civil-liberties and civil-rights law that formed a significant part of the revival of constitutionalism which occurred during World War II and the cold war. It detracts nothing from the importance of this contribution to meeting the totalitarian challenge, however, to observe that the

HERMAN BELZ, who teaches constitutional history at the University of Maryland, has been awarded a Guggenheim fellowship for 1981.

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Court's rulings on free speech and equal rights, conjoined as they were with virtually categorical approval of government regulation of business, promoted certain interests at the expense of others. And as one might expect of judges appointed by Franklin D. Roosevelt, the interests supported by the Supreme Court from the late 1930's through the 1960's were the interests of the New Deal coalition.

In 1938 Justice Harlan Fiske Stone suggested that the Court should accept pretty much at face value legislation regulating business, but should take a skeptical view of legislation which on its face touched on political and civil liberties and the rights of minority groups. Thereafter the Court in a broad sense applied these guidelines in interpreting the Constitution. Picketing and other forms of labor action were protected as civil liberties under the free-speech guarantees of the First Amendment. The economic interests of the steadily expanding federal bureaucracy, a mainstay of the New Deal, were safeguarded by judicial decisions in the internal-security cases of the 1950's and 1960's which defined government employment as a right rather than a privilege. The promise of social improvement held out by the civil-rights movement, at first implicitly and then explicitly, illustrated the conjunction of humanitarian principle and political-economic interest. And the remarkable elaboration of First Amendment law on freedom of speech and the press provided a solid foundation for powerful interests in the fields of journalism and communications. It becomes increasingly clear that as political and economic gain was a reason why businessmen supported laissez-faire constitutionalism in the late 19th century, so political and economic interest has given modern liberals good reason to uphold both libertarian and egalitarian doctrines in the post-New Deal era.

In this context James Simon's book on Justice Douglas takes on an importance that transcends the orthodox liberalism which informs its general thesis. In a nutshell, Simon regards Douglas as "a heroic symbol of the human spirit, offering an unwavering belief that the power and dignity of the individual could make the nation and the world a better place." Concerning Douglas's place in American history, Simon agrees with Clark Clifford's judgment: "Because of Bill Douglas, each one of us is freer, safer, and stronger."

There is ample reason to question this conclusion, and to argue on the contrary that liberal activist judges like Douglas, while greatly expanding the bounds of cultural and social expression, have weakened the moral principles of republican liberty and hence liberty itself. Yet this is not really an issue that concerns Simon; he merely asserts without attempting to demonstrate the goodness of Douglas's work on the Court. His chief task, rather, is to provide for the first time a full and accurate account of Douglas's career, and in this he is admirably successful. Indeed, although Simon does not think of it in this way, his book is an impressively honest study of the Supreme Court Justice who more than any other has been taken as representative of modern judicial liberalism.

Douglas wrote about himself so much, ceaselessly striving to appear the paragon of humanitarianism, that scholars have almost as a matter of course taken him at his word. Thus John P. Frank's sketch in the standard *Justices of the Supreme Court* (1969) refers to Douglas's sympathy for the downtrodden acquired in the experiences of youth, his roots in Brandeisian liberalism, his progressive legal scholarship before joining the Court. The evidence in Simon's book, however, refutes this inspiring tale of a lifelong liberal crusade. What it shows instead is an exceedingly ambitious and opportunistic man of no progressive political tendencies whatsoever, who after achieving success as a technically proficient corporate-law specialist attached himself in a purely expedient way to the New Deal and rode the wave of modern liberalism to a position of power, fame, and, not least, expense-account comfort.

The most illuminating part of Simon's story concerns Douglas's pre-Court years. Contrary to Douglas's assertion (in his autobiograph-

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ical writings) that he was hostile toward the establishment from an early age, Simon finds no evidence of such an attitude in Douglas as a young boy, a collegian, or a law-school student. Ambitious for success and determined to use his quick mind to get it, Douglas went to work for a prominent Wall Street law firm and developed sympathetic ties to the investment banking business, which he retained until he entered the government in 1934. Leaving the firm for a teaching post at Columbia, Douglas for practical reasons supported the more reform-minded faction in the fight that occurred in 1928 for control of the law school. When his side lost, Douglas accepted a position at Yale and within three years parlayed an offer from the University of Chicago, where his friend Robert M. Hutchins was now president, into the Sterling professorship at Yale. Eager to join the government, Douglas pulled strings and maneuvered until he was appointed to prepare a study for the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1934. This started him on his political career.

IF DOUGLAS tried to convince the public of anything in the image-building that so preoccupied him, it was that he had fought for liberty and equality all his life. It is significant, therefore, that Simon finds no evidence of any political or ideological tendencies in Douglas until he set out to win a spot in the New Deal. For someone who professed such a keen sense of class consciousness, Simon writes, Douglas was "surprisingly aloof" from political activity and opinions. Later famed for his libertarianism, Douglas neither was involved in nor apparently did he even care about the Sacco-Vanzetti case, a fact glaringly at odds with Douglas's insistence that he supported this great liberal cause of the 1920's. Similarly, Douglas's legal career on Wall Street and at Columbia and Yale shows no ideological pattern. An able legal technician, Douglas was if anything critical of excessive government regulation of the investment banking business, even as late as 1933.

But in order to get ahead in the New Deal, Douglas adopted a liberal political philosophy that called for government regulation of business. Using what Simon describes as "stump speech rhetoric," he carved out a new position aimed at protecting "the helpless, the suckers, the underdogs." Thereafter, through carefully contrived means, Douglas fashioned an image of himself as a compassionate libertarian and egalitarian. He became, in short, a professional liberal, and after serving on the Securities and Exchange Commission was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1939, where without losing stride he promoted his political career in judicial robes. For some time the focus of Douglas's ambitions was presidential, and there was persistent speculation about him as a candidate for the Vice Presidency under Roosevelt and Truman. Concerning this issue Simon aptly points out that Douglas never publicly denied the ambition, however much he disavowed it privately.

SIMON provides a generally reliable if familiar account of major developments in constitutional law in which Douglas was involved. Yet of greater value for understanding Douglas is the evidence concerning his literary and intellectual enterprises. As loose ethics and laissez-faire on the part of businessmen were gaining the official disapproval of the New Deal, these same qualities were catching on among liberal reformers and intellectuals. Douglas's career illustrates the process. Simon tells us that as early as 1924, while assisting a Columbia professor in a research project for a trade association, Douglas became introduced "to expense account living, and it did not take him long to decide that he liked it." A few years later he won the Chicago offer at an unheard of $20,000 and used it to wangle the merely extraordinary salary of $15,000 out of Yale. Then as a member of the Supreme Court Douglas financed travels all over the world by getting advances from publishers for books that he later wrote about his journeys. In the 1960's, as is well known, Douglas received $12,000 a year as president of the Parvin Foundation.

"GUESS WHO publicly set fire to a Soviet flag last December? Give up? Okay, it was a group of Harvard and Radcliffe students — and they did it right in the center of Harvard Yard. 'We feel sympathy for those people who have to fight and die for their freedom. We don't want to allow people to forget Afghanistan and Poland.' These are clearly callow freshmen, not yet tutored in the complexities of a world where the East/West struggle has been replaced by the North/South dialogue."

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The Watergate affair has made us forget the antecedent, relatively minor, yet nonetheless revealing scandals and excesses of liberal Democrats in the 1960's. Douglas's entrepreneurship provoked an impeachment inquiry in the House of Representatives. More serious was the case of Justice Abe Fortas, who apparently made a contract with the Wolfson Foundation to receive $20,000 a year; this led to the first resignation from the Supreme Court in American history. Trading on their prestige, Douglas and Fortas gave a new twist to old-fashioned, laissez-faire individualism. Their politics may have differed from those of businessmen in the age of enterprise, and the kind of property they protected was literary and intellectual rather than industrial-productive; but where they differed not at all was in their pursuit of the economic main chance, carried on in the name of abstract principles of liberty, which they pronounced even as they denied protection to older property interests.

DOUGLAS's final years on the Court were unhappy ones. His egocentricity and hypocrisy, and also, Simon notes, his professional irresponsibility created enmity between him and his colleagues. For the most part Douglas simply refused to assume a collegial role in the work of the Court. Douglas's irresponsibility was evident also in ways Simon does not consider but which are perhaps even more damning. I refer in particular to his exaggerated and inaccurate, not to say deliberately dishonest, diatribes and condemnations of persons and public figures with whom he was connected. Time and again throughout his autobiographical writings Douglas says the most preposterous things about these people, many of which Simon proves to be demonstrably false.

In 1948 Douglas rejected the offer of the Vice Presidency on the Democratic ticket, giving as the reason his professed devotion to the Supreme Court—which prompted a skeptical Harry S. Truman to remark, "No professional liberal is intellectually honest." If the evidence in this book does not incontestably bear out the truth of Truman's assertion, it nonetheless diminishes Douglas's stature as the honest and courageous voice of modern liberalism that has been his reputation for a generation.

We mourn the death of

Gerard Weinstock

1919-1981

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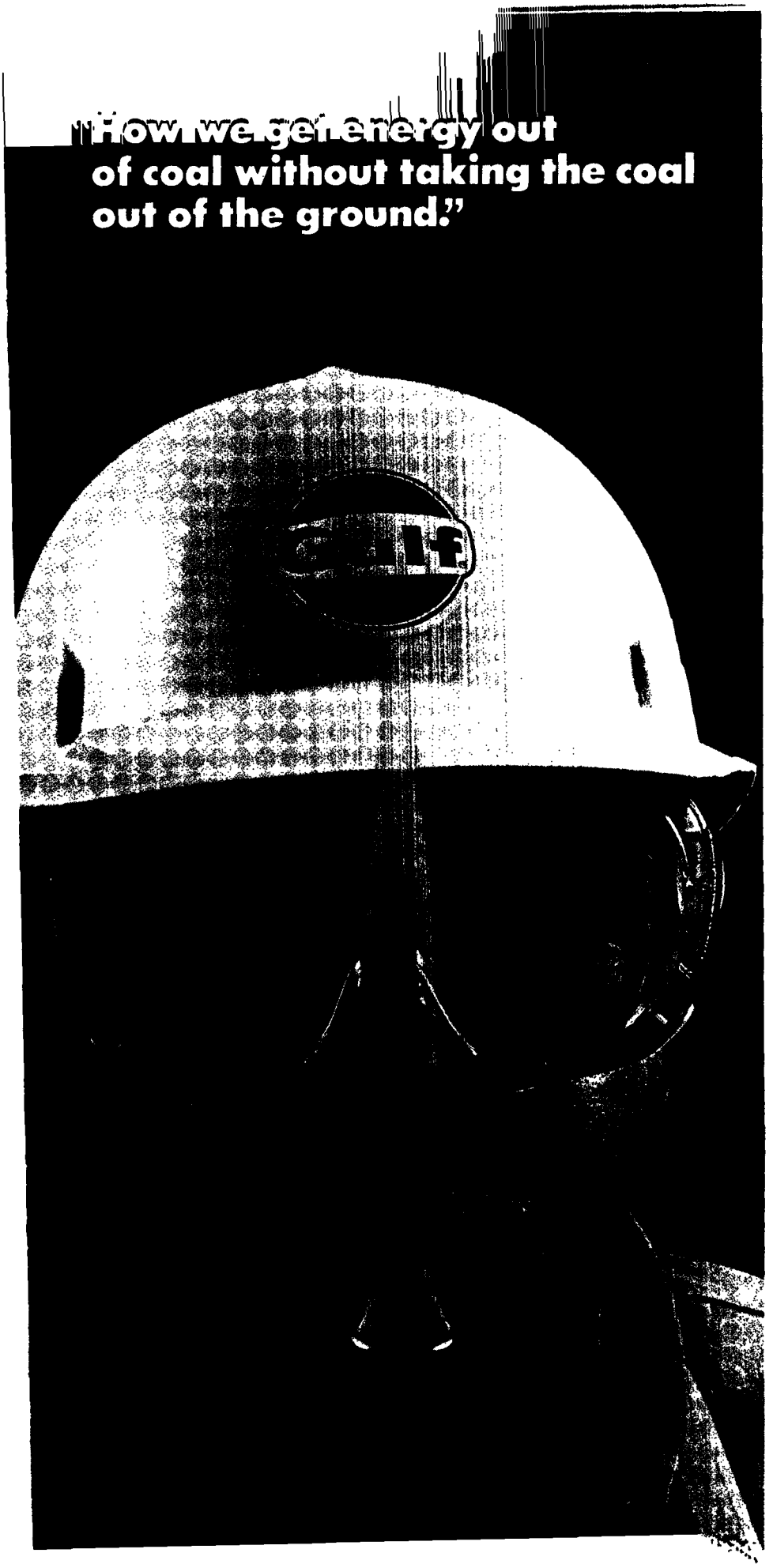
"How we get energy out of coal without taking the coal out of the ground."



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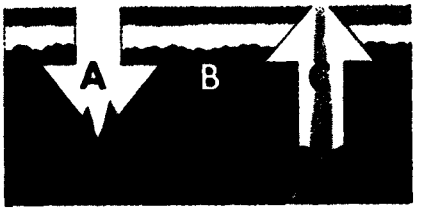

Air through injection well supports combustion of coal at A, fire heats coal at B, which produces gas recovered through production well, C.

of Energy on a way to extract the energy from that coal without mining it. We drill an injection well to set fire to the coal. By burning some of the coal, we heat up the rest, which causes it to produce gas. That's why it's called underground coal gasification.

"We had a test burn here in Rawlins, Wyoming, late in 1979, and we're setting up another one. Our hope is that by 1990, industry will be able to use this kind of synthetic gas, which of course will make us less dependent on expensive imported crude oil as an energy source.

"At Gulf, our first priority is to get all the oil and natural gas we can out of resources right here in America. But we're working on a lot of other good ideas, too. Underground coal gasification is one of them; and we're working with synthetic fuels, tar sands, geothermal energy, and other alternative energy sources.

"Overall, you might say that the business we're really in is the business of energy for tomorrow."

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